DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 474 768 UD 032 956

AUTHOR	Warkentin, Robert, Ed.; Rea, Dan, Ed.
TITLE	Youth-Adult Partnerships: Unity in Diversity.
ISBN	ISBN-0-07-366118-X
PUB DATE	1998-00-00
NOTE	177p.; Papers presented at the Annual Youth-At-Risk Conference (8th, Savannah, GA, March 1-3, 1998).
AVAILABLE FROM	Georgia Southern University, College of Education, P.O. Box 8144, Statesboro, GA 30460. Tel: 912-681-5091.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Collected Works - General (020) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS
DESCRIPTORS	*Adolescents; *Adults; Disadvantaged Youth; *Diversity (Student); Elementary Secondary Education; *High Risk Students; Multicultural Education; *Partnerships in Education; *Urban Youth; Youth Programs

ABSTRACT

This book offers practical principles and programs for establishing "youth-adult partnerships" to bridge the generation gap and prepare youth for a future free of unnecessary risk. Following an introduction titled "Diversity as Strength in Partnerships: Collective Responses to Complex Problems" by Robert Warkentin and Dan Rea, the papers are: (1) "Reclaiming Our Youth" (Steve Van Bockern); (2) "Creating Caring Classrooms and Schools: Differences in Curriculum, Instruction, and Climate" (Harbison Pool and Cherry C. Brewton); (3) "Listen Up! Hear the Voices of Our Youth" (Sheronde Glover and Sonni Herrington-Jackson); (4) "The Road 'Less Traveled By': Collaborating with Teens for Community Change" (Ella M. Williamson); (5) "Using Positive Action for the Prevention, Intervention and Treatment of Youth at Risk" (Carol Gerber Allred); (6) "A Micro-Community of Learners" (E. LaWanda Ransom); (7) "Involving Minority Parents of At-Risk Middle Schoolers" (Barbara G. Romine and LaTonya Gooden); (8) "Razzle-Dazzle Reading and Writing: Motivating for Empowerment" (Patricia West Williams); (9) "Motivating Reluctant Middle-Level Writers" (Valerie Cole and Dale Purvis); (10) "Interactive Video-Disc: Reaching Students from At-Risk Environments" (Carol A. Goings and Douglas A. Goings); (11) "The One-Room Schoolhouse Revisited: An Alternative High School Program in Rural Illinois" (Joyce Dill and Diane Kruse); (12) "Successful CAI Programs for At-Risk Students" (Susan Trimble and Eva Barna); (13) "Workforce Development: Success through Community, Business, and School Partnership" (Korynne Taylor-Dunlop, JoAnne Bailey, and Robert Moon); (14) "The Liberty Partnership Program: A Model for Success" (Laura M. Arvin); (15) "Growing Your Own: A Model for Preparing Paraprofessionals To Be Fully Certified Teachers in Urban Classrooms" (Evelyn Baker Dandy); (16) "Interdisciplinary Teaming in High Schools: The Gotta Be Team" (Deborah Thomas); (17) "The Teacher as Entrepreneur: A Diverse Approach to Teacher Education" (Judy Shasek); (18) "The Journey: A Tool for Assessing Kids 'At Risk'" (Patricia A. Simmons); (19) "Effects of Ego Involvement and Verbal Persuasion Type on Self-efficacy and Commitment among Adolescents in a Therapeutic Recreation Setting" (John Kablach); (20) "The Hidden Shame of the Child Protective Service System: Institutional Child Abuse and Neglect" (Lisa J. Felix and Mary Ann Rosenbauer); (21) "Recreation as an Intervention Tool in Juvenile Detention

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Centers" (Clinton D. Longacre); and (22) "Risk Factors Associated with Juvenile delinquency: A Case for Early Intervention and Prevention Programs" (Melissa Songer). Each paper contains references. (SLD)

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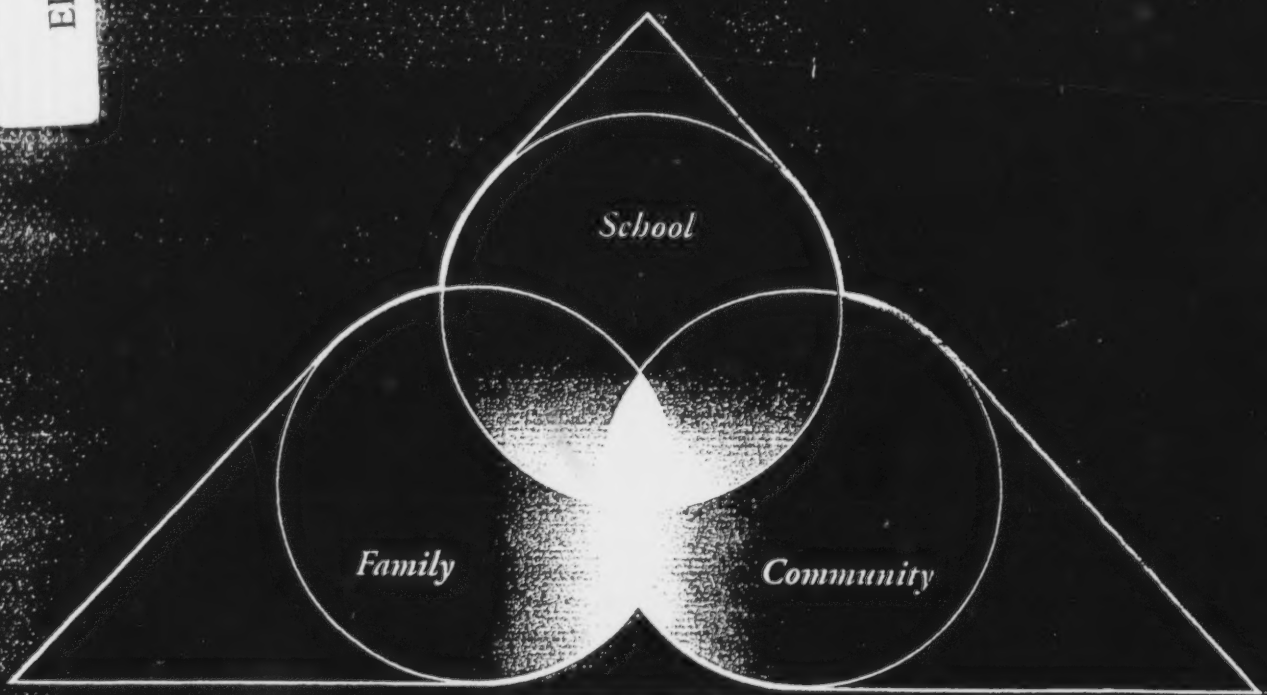

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 GDP GDP 9 0 9 8 7

ISBN 0-07-366118-X
Editor: Judy T. Ice
Cover Designer: Robert Warkentin
Printer/Binder: Greyden Press

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many individuals who contributed to the successful completion of this book. It is based on an edited selection and thematic organization of papers presented at the Eighth Annual Youth-At-Risk Conference in Savannah, Georgia. While it is not possible to thank all these individuals by name, we would like to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of a few individuals. Ms. Sharon Pratt and Ms. Sybil Fickle of Continuing Education worked with the Conference Planning committee to organize, coordinate, and administer a well planned conference. Ms. Tina Brown of the Publication Center did an excellent job of typing the book and making it camera ready for production. Dr. Arnie Cooper, Dean of the College of Education at Georgia Southern University, provided sponsorship for the conference and this book. Ms. Jo Hanschke provided assistance in helping meet deadlines and with transcript revisions. In addition, we gratefully acknowledge the excellent book cover design by Ray Hoffman, Publication Specialist. We also wish to acknowledge the collaborative support for the conference provided by the following agencies: Savannah-Chatham Public Schools, Chatham/Savannah Youth Futures Authority, Housing Authority of Savannah, Tidelands, Savannah State University, Armstrong State Atlantic University, and the Southeast Cooperative Regional Development Resources Center; Bethesda Home for Boys, and Junior Achievement.

Finally, we would like to thank the many presenters, moderators, conferences, and faculty and staff at Georgia Southern University who have continued to support the At-Risk Conferences with their dedicated efforts.

Introduction

Diversity as Strength in Partnerships: Collective Responses to Complex Problems

Robert Warkentin and Dan Rea

This book describes a number of programs representing many different perspectives with a common goal: To create the conditions that enable at-risk youth to directly confront obstacles and apparent defeats in their lives, to overcome the odds against them, and to emerge with new skills, knowledge and confidence to face future problems in a successful manner. Just as the needs and problems of young people are complex and multifaceted, so must be the kinds of outreach and support programs that address these needs and problems (Stallings, 1995). The variety of programs described in this book represent the conviction that diversity is a strength. This conviction also drives our efforts to continue the Annual Youth-At-Risk Conference and to expand its participation over the past nine years. Such a conviction engenders creativity and bold enthusiasm to confront the difficult problems facing youth today. This book consists of an organized selection of edited papers presented at the Eighth Annual Youth-At-Risk Conference held in Savannah, Georgia, 1997. Youth-Adult Partnerships was the theme of this national conference and serves to organize the sections of this book.

Diversity-as-strength is evident in the programs described in this book in two ways. First, it is evident in how programs conceptualize the needs and problems of youth and how intervention strategies are implemented. The programs presented here reflect creativity, comprehensiveness and relevancy. For example, youth-adult partnerships between community agencies, businesses, schools and churches, represent networks of individuals and groups coordinating efforts to achieve common goals. The diversity of views represented by these programs reveal sensitivity, responsiveness and intimacy with the kinds of real-world problems confronting youth at risk. Such multifaceted outreach efforts could not be performed by isolated groups or separately by individuals (Allington & Johnson, 1989). The collective approach serves to unite strengths, experience and wisdom thereby offering young people greater assistance and opportunities for growth. The new challenge of partnership then, is to coordinate components together into a meaningful whole for beneficial purposes.

Second, diversity-as-strength can be seen in how these programs emphasize the positive side or potential of youth at risk rather than just the negative or deficient side. That is, the programs described in this book go beyond the goal of merely identifying the impediments and shortcomings of youth to the equally important goal of identifying and optimizing the possibilities and opportunities for growth and resiliency in each

individual (Werner, 1989). Thus, the programs presented herein describe not only approaches intended to correct negative problems of youth, they describe interventions that are founded upon an optimistic hope and belief in the unique qualities of every young person regardless of social labels (such as "at-risk"). For example, youth-adult partnerships seek to provide youth with authentic, personalized kinds of experiences so that they may make positive choices about their future, accept responsibility, enhance their skills, and increase the quality of their life. Such programs start with an assumption that children and youth are valuable and worthwhile members of families, communities, schools, and worksites. True partnership, according to these programs, is founded upon a intrinsic belief and commitment to what children and youth *can* do (Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Rueman, Flanagan, & MacIver, 1993). This kind of partnership is characterized by a fluid cross-talk and exchange of trust between youths and adults. The new challenge of partnership then, is to maintain a bold optimism and excitement for what can be done in the lives of every child and youth, but at the same time to maintain an awareness of the very real and enormous problems and obstacles that exist for many youth in our society today.

In this light, we have continued to expand the conference in terms of participation, membership, and outreach in an effort to bring together a diverse range of participants, community agencies and programs. Our goal is to stretch our current understandings of at-risk issues in new ways and to broaden our vision of what can be done for young people who are in need of support and assistance. The present view of diversity-as-strength serves to liberate our thinking so that we may see youth in complex and multifaceted ways and that we might consider viewpoints different from our own. Overall, we hope to stir the mixture of diversity so that creative responses emerge and enduring results follow. By uniting diverse voices together in a coordinated perspective we hope that the needs of young people can be more successfully met. The chapters in this book provide guidance toward achieving the goal of unity in diversity.

Youth-Adult Partnerships Build Unity

Youth-adult partnerships may be defined as mutually empowering relationships between youth and adults (Chandross, 1986), which are based on personal trust and common goals. These partnerships provide an opportunity for youth and adults to share power and responsibility in the pursuit of common goals such as personal development, education, job training, and community development. Examples of youth-adult partnerships include relationships of youth with a variety of adults such as: parents, relatives, teachers, tutors, counselors, principals, ministers, coaches, community mentors, work place mentors, Big Brother/Big Sister, and volunteer grandparents.

Partnerships are more than one-way mentoring relationships where all knowing adults give advice and young proteges blindly follow. Genuine partnerships are two-way relationships based on open communication and shared decision making. When adults openly share their time, knowledge, and resources with youth and genuinely

trust them to make responsible decisions, they enable them to develop the needed skills to become mature individuals and productive citizens.

According to Chandross (1986), genuine partnerships are not easy to achieve because "Adults are accustomed to making decisions for young people and young people have been brought up to accept that adults made decisions for them. These two habits are hard to break" (p. 5). Adults need to learn to share their power with youth and not always have the final say, and youth need to develop the confidence to work side-by-side with adults without feeling inferior.

Genuine partnerships are complicated by the fact that youth and adults do not have equal levels of power, resources, experience, or knowledge. This inequality can lead to power struggles where adults attempt to dominate youth and youth try to achieve their power in defiance of adults. It can also lead to learned helplessness where adults attempt to fix all of youth's problems and youth passively let adults make all the decisions for them. Furthermore, it can lead to indifference where adults neglect youth and youth are left to flounder without guidance.

Partnerships provide a way of bridging this diversity of levels and creating social unity. This unity is created by two sources. First, it is created by the trust and caring of a healthy personal relationship. This trust and caring leads to a personal bond between adults and youth that accepts and respects individual differences. Research (Bernard, 1993) shows that one caring adult can make a critical difference in helping a youth to overcome seemingly impossible odds. Second, it is created by the pursuit of common goals (Johnson & Johnson, 1994) such as personal development, education, job training, and community development. It is in everyone's best interest that our youth become mature, well educated/trained, productive citizens. These common goals motivate youth and adults to cooperate to achieve success. Youth and adults may not have equal power, resources, experiences, or knowledge but they can be united by common bonds and goals. Both need each other because they have equally valuable and necessary contributions to make to mutual interests.

Partnerships create unity in diversity. Adults in partnership do not attempt to make youth over in their image. They respect youth's individual differences in personality, learning style, interest, and opinion because they want youth to develop their own identity. Youth in partnership do not need to defy adults. They appreciate adults' accumulated experience and knowledge because they can benefit from them. Throughout this book the authors present a wide variety of youth-adult partnerships that have been successful in creating unity in diversity. In the following seven sections we highlight some main points relevant to the theme of how youth-adult partnerships build unity in diversity.

Partnerships for Enriching Our Youth

The first section lays the foundation for the remaining sections by explaining and analyzing some of the general principles of youth-adult partnerships. Van Bockern

presents a personalized account of how adults can help unattached youth to "reclaim" their lives. Adults play a key role in either frustrating or assisting youth to meet their "core needs" for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity. Pool and Brewton present an in-depth review of how to create a "caring" school. When administrators and teachers form caring relationships with youth, it makes a critical difference for the curriculum, instruction, and climate of the school. Glover and Herrington-Jackson define the "ideal roles" that adults and youth should play in constructing productive partnerships. They suggest that adults can help youth to start "youth groups." These volunteeristic groups allow youth to give back to the community while bringing about self-fulfillment. Finally, Williamson examines the positive value of "peer-to-peer mentoring" of youth as a protective factor against negative peer pressure. She recommends "Teens As Teachers" as a model of how adults can train older youth to have a healthy influence on younger youth.

Partnerships for Elementary Students

The second section focuses on the positive influence that teachers, counselors, parents, and community leaders can have on elementary students. Allred describes the philosophy and practices of Positive Action, which is a nationally recognized character training program that she originated in the early 1980s. She proposes that teaching youth to make positive choices and practice positive actions will result in a positive self-concept as well as improve academic performance. Ransom describes the implementation of a simulated micro-community, called "Bearville," within the classrooms of fourth and fifth graders. As citizens of Bearville, students hold jobs, conduct business, and pay taxes. In the process of fulfilling their civic duties, they are motivated to practice and improve their academic skills.

Partnerships for Middle School Students

The third section focuses on the positive influence that teachers can have on middle school students and their parents. Romine and Gooden describe how teachers were able to bypass minority parents' fears of the academic setting and more freely involve them in their children's education. They enlisted the support of the local minister as well as civic leaders and were able to conduct productive parent meetings within the "neutral setting" of the community church. Williams argues that "quiet" students sitting in straight rows are not necessarily the best conditions for learning. She demonstrates that African-American students can be empowered to read and write by using motivational activities that encourage creative self-expression and cooperative interaction. Cole and Purvis reveal that all writers face the "blank page," painfully aware of the risks that it presents. Reluctant middle-level students are especially intimidated by the writing process. They propose that these students are best motivated by writing some each day, using a wide variety of "low risk" writing experiences and employing portfolios to document and share their writing with peers. Lastly, Goings

and Goings demonstrate how the interactive video disc can be used as a powerful tool for motivating students to learn. They explain that this learning tool is a multi-sensory, proactive approach to learning that stimulates students' multiple intelligences.

Partnerships for Secondary and Post Secondary Students

The fourth section focuses on how adults can help secondary and post secondary youth to become better students, graduate from high school, go to college, and become skilled workers. Dill and Kruse describe how they successfully implemented a cost-effective, "school-within-a school" alternative program for high school dropouts. This school is characterized as a "one-room schoolhouse" because of its personalized approach and as a "school of choice" because no student attends the school against his or her choice. Trimble and Barna analyze how an alternative school successfully implemented two "computer-assisted instructional" (CAI) programs. They find that collaborative funding efforts, the development of in-house talent, and research-based classroom changes were the keys to success. Taylor-Dunlop, Bailey, and Moon report the successful implementation of a "workforce skill development program" to place youth, 18 years or older with a history of high school failure, in livable wage jobs. They find that this program was remarkably successful and cost effective because of its collaborative organization and comprehensive training of youth in both "job skills" and "life skills." Completing this section, Arvin describes a "college bound program" based on the collaboration of a university and school system. She identifies some of the successful program components such as university student mentors, Saturday tutoring, open rap sessions, SAT preparation classes, College Night, Career Afternoon, Get Away Trips, Recognition Ceremony, and parent involvement.

Partnerships for Teacher Training

The fifth section focuses on preservice and inservice teacher training programs and approaches. Dandy describes a model university program for preparing paraprofessionals to be certified teachers in urban classrooms. This program has been highly successful in certifying under represented African-American males, who in turn will serve as realistic role models for African-American youth. Thomas provides a first-hand account of how "interdisciplinary teaming," a concept taken from middle schools, was adapted and implemented at a high school. She reports important lessons learned and pitfalls to avoid in developing high school teams. Concluding this section, Shasek presents a new teacher training approach called "Edupreneurship." This approach captures the innovative spirit of business entrepreneurship and applies it to education.

Partnerships for the Promotion of Mental Health

The sixth section focuses on how counselors, teachers, and state workers can promote the mental health of youth and how delivery systems might be improved to prevent further abuse and neglect. Simmons discuss how counselors and teachers can

use the Journey program to guide adolescents through a series of developmental stages in search of their personal identity. In this search youth need to prove their maturity by overcoming inner obstacles, such as self-doubt, and come to realize that they are the "hero of their life journey." Kablach empirically studies the effect of verbal persuasion and ego involvement on the self-efficacy of depressed adolescents. Although the findings are not conclusive due to experimental limitations, they suggest that positive verbal messages may be useful in the treatment of depressed adolescents. Finally, Felix reveals that children removed from abusive situations in their homes are sometimes further abused and neglected while in state institutions and foster homes. She proposes a set of policies and procedures to assure safer environments for children placed in state custody.

Partnerships for Juvenile Delinquency Intervention

The seventh and final section focuses on intervention and prevention programs for juvenile delinquents. Longacre explains how recreation programs can be used as an intervention tool in juvenile detention centers. According to Longacre, recreation provides a relaxed atmosphere for learning to trust, follow rules, and cooperate with others. He identifies operating principles that are important for establishing productive recreation programs. Lastly, Songer empirically explores the early contributors to juvenile delinquency. Her findings suggest that family dysfunction is an early precursor to juvenile delinquency. She proposes that social programs focus on "providing support to families so that each member can reach their full potential."

Conclusion

As noted above, youth-adult partnerships possess a number valuable qualities. First, *partnerships provide valuable opportunities* for youth. Partnerships are purposeful arrangements, based on trust and mutual goals, that unite youths and adults. Partnerships are diverse because they must respond to the changing needs of children and youth. Moreover, this diversified flexibility provides a variety of meaningful opportunities for young people to participate in and work together with adults. These opportunities enable youth to channel their fresh vitality and youthful enthusiasm to accomplish worthwhile goals. Partnerships enable youth to effectively draw upon their resources and open new vistas. In this way, partnerships have a bright future, for they serve to organize youthful energy into meaningful forms that are valuable to our culture (Rogoff, 1990).

Second, *partnerships establish a structure* for youth to channel and refine their emerging capabilities. Partnerships engage youth in activities that are appropriately tailored to the physical, cognitive, and social strengths (and limitations) of youth. Partnerships enable youth to organize and extend their emerging capabilities in new ways and to serve new purposes. Within this structure, youth discover new ways to express themselves and to develop new skills that are valued by the partnership. Equality in relationships with adults fosters responsibility, independence and maturity as youth

learn that they are being "taken seriously" by adults (Eccles et al., 1993).

Third, *partnerships send a message* to our children and youth. On the one hand, partnerships declare to our youth that we must "work together" —in the best sense of mutual cooperation and sharing. On the other hand, partnerships denote a serious concern that we are neither comfortable with nor helpless about negative environmental conditions, or high-risk behaviors, that threaten the full development of youth. Partnerships do not ignore the difficult plight of disadvantaged children and youth, rather, partnerships are attempts to create a variety of solutions —solutions that allow youth equal participation, involvement and responsibility.

Finally, *partnerships convey that unity is a model for problem solving*. Partnerships are social organizations that stand as evidence that past, present, and future generations are committed to solidarity in their approach to solving problems. Within partnerships, unity and equality form the foundation for the problem solving process, and like a concert of voices, unite youths and adults in spirit and hope. Partnerships tackle problems through united efforts and endeavors.

The qualities mentioned above distinguish youth-adult partnerships as a powerful tool for improving the lives of children and youth in the years to come. However, the timing for partnerships is urgent for children and youth are at a pivotal time in their lives. It is during these crucial years that young people are not only impressionable and vulnerable, but also full of vitality and life. Partnerships can play a key role in providing continuity from generation to generation. The promise of partnerships is just beginning to be explored. ■

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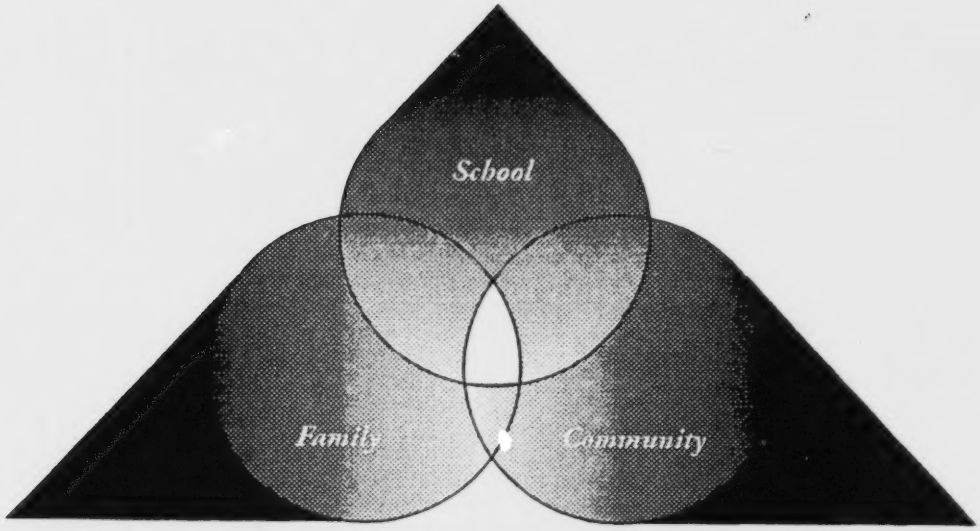
I. Partnerships for Enriching Our Youth



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Chapter 1

Reclaiming Our Youth

Steve Van Bockern

I have been writing to and talking with two men who have "done time" in prison. Howard, a seventeen year old in 1937, was hitch-hiking to the west coast with Norman, his seventeen year old friend. Dillinger and Capone "wanna-bes" they were on their way to set up a pick-pocket gang. When they ran out of money, they hatched a simple plan: hijack a car and rob the driver. A young school teacher picked them up on a back-stretch of South Dakota highway. When she refused to turn over her money and fought back, Norman shot her. Howard hit her over the head with a hammer. The boys were later caught and brought to the hospital where the twenty-eight year old woman lay drifting in and out of consciousness. She was able to identify the boys before she died. Howard and Norman were sentenced as adults to a mandatory life sentence in prison. Six years later, Norman hanged himself with his belt. Howard served 59 years. It has given him the dubious distinction of being the nation's longest-serving inmate.

Bobby is serving 35 years for committing various crimes. The most recent was assaulting a police officer. Bobby was a childhood acquaintance. I remember him as the kid who gave me my first puppy and the fearless adventurer who climbed under the railroad bridge as the train thundered above. He was the kid who always seemed to be around to help my dad, a produce man, catch chickens that had escaped from their cages. I am interested in Howard, Bobby and others like them because their stories can help us understand that there is a better way to deal with troubled and troubling youth. The fact that these two men committed horrendous crimes cannot be dismissed. I will not argue with the families of victims that we should simply forgive and forget. There is a need for protection from dangerous men and women, young and old alike. But to close our minds to a growing body of research that tells us what works so that our primitive needs for vengeance can be served only perpetuates a system whose answers seem to be grounded in "getting tough." Like a flock of crows in the tree tops, many only continue to squawk: "Punishment, expulsion, imprisonment, and execution."

We do need to get tougher with our young people. But the toughness requires adults to demonstrate a mental perseverance as we work hard to meet our childrens' needs before they find themselves in Howard's or Bobby's situations. By meeting the needs of our young people we lay the foundation for reclaiming those who otherwise will only cause more pain for themselves and others.

To answer the question, "What are the needs of our youth?" my colleagues and I have explored traditional Native American child rearing practices, the efforts of

extraordinary youth-work pioneers and contemporary psychology to find a core set of needs that can drive our work with young people (Brendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 1990). Those core needs are embodied in what we call the *Circle of Courage*.

Native Americans use the circle as a symbol for life. Instead of seeing life as either black or white or a series of sequential steps taking us from birth to death, the circle suggests everything is connected. Light and dark, good and bad, giving and receiving; even life and death are connected. The circle is divided into colored quadrants representing the four directions, seasons and peoples of the world. The colors are represented in each of the other three parts of the circle further supporting the idea that all is related. The medicine wheel is a sacred symbol for Native Americans. We have used the medicine wheel to display what we consider to be the four overriding needs of young people: belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. We consider these needs to be the birthright of all our children. If any need is not met, the child is at risk and is in danger of being hurt. A hurting child hurts others.

It was clear through my conversations with Howard and Bobby that they have lived broken lives. Their circles are incomplete. Both Howard and Bobby's stories include absent, abusive, and alcoholic fathers. Their mothers, with little outside support, were overwhelmed with the tasks of life. Howard's first crime was stealing purses although he told me he was really a good kid. He offered as evidence his four years of perfect Sunday school attendance. Bobby said his first crime was breaking into my dad's buildings. He would either steal a chicken to eat because there was never enough food to go around or he would let a few go. The next day he would show up, catch them and collect a nickel from my unsuspecting dad.

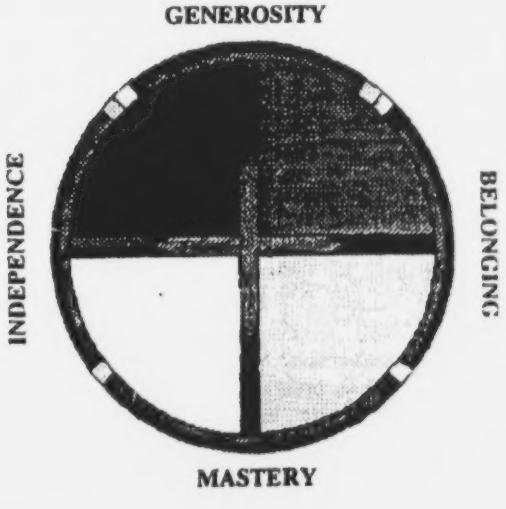

FIGURE 1
Circle of Courage

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Both boys liked elementary school. Howard was particularly good in math. In prison he taught himself calculus. Bobby liked to write and learn about other countries. Bobby said that his elementary school was the one place that seemed safe. However, things changed for the boys as they got older. In 8th grade, Howard wrote a "dirty letter" to his teacher. He was spanked and sent to a reformatory school. Howard told me that the worst thing about the reformatory school was the rubber strap used across his legs. "It would put me down—it hurt like hell," he said. Bobby was kicked out of school for missing too much school. Bobby wrote that he "was sad to the bone" when the principal ignored his plea to get back into school.

Bobby's need for independence found him traveling with a carnival when he was fifteen. He began living with an older, drug addicted woman. She used Bobby to make pornographic video tapes. Bobby found her one morning—dead of a drug overdose. Howard's search for independence revealed itself in cigarette smoking, staying out late, stealing purses, and running away from home.

When asked, neither boy could identify anything that they had done for others that made them proud. Bobby could only tell me about his friend whom he killed by accident when they were fourteen.

Howard was repeatedly raped, sodomized, beaten by inmates, isolated, and exposed to experimental drugs. Fourteen times his brain felt the effects of electroshock treatments. Bobby, who knew Howard and has heard the prison stories about him, wrote me that Howard was forced by the prison guards to cut his friend Norman down from the shower stalls. The guards made Howard lay on top of the body while they beat him with the same belt Norman used to hang himself.

Understandably, for Howard and Bobby, the bonds that transmit basic human needs from adults to the young began unraveling from their earliest years. But not so clearly recognized in our society today, even in relatively stable families, there is an erosion in the quantity of time that hurried, frantic and stressed parents are spending in genuine interaction with their children. For millions of growing children, life in this technologically rich but spiritually impoverished society is difficult. The stressors of life are spawning a generation of adult detached children who have lost their sense of well-being (Benson, 1993). The wounds of being an unclaimed or forgotten child are deep and disfiguring. Children with "affect hunger," a term used by behavioral scientists who identified a population of children reared in sterile orphanages, strike out and desperately seek ways to fill their needs, albeit ineffective. The need for belonging is sought in gangs and connections to false friends and adults who exploit youth. Mastery is found in snatching purses, stealing chickens, or displaying sexual prowess on the video screen. The need for independence or a sense of control finds itself in drug and alcohol use. Generosity is measured by the drugs and alcohol shared with others.

Children who feel unloved and unattached are often children of rage and rebellion. They become locked in defiant opposition to adults who reciprocate their anger with counter-aggression. The child becomes adult-wary, forever biting the hand that did not fed them (Brendtro, Van Bockern, & Clementson, 1995).

Instead of being preoccupied with the deviance and pathology of troubled children, it is much more profitable to see even the most difficult behaviors as normal responses of children struggling to cope with abnormal environments and circumstances. It takes empathetic and well trained professionals to understand that swearing, threats, physical violence and drug use are the way some children cry for help.

While defiant youth may seem to relish freedom from adult control, life empty of attachment is the opposite of true independence. John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth, attachment researchers, suggest that secure autonomy or independence is built upon a solid base of ongoing human attachment. Unattached youth, may noisily proclaim their pseudo-independence: "Nobody tells me what to do!" But this statement only masks the reality of what they clearly feel: "Nobody really cares."

Belonging, mastery, independence and generosity are necessary goals for all of us. The fact that troubled young people pursue these worthy ends with the wrong means is an encouraging sign. These youths have not given up but are still struggling to fix discouraging life situations. Instead of fighting them, a more powerful, courageous and tougher strategy is to tap the strengths of these same kids. Those who hope to reach and help these adult-wary students must be able to disengage and deescalate conflict, listen and respond with empathy, clarify for children their needs and feelings, help them take responsible actions by teaching coping strategies including emotional skills and encourage and nurture their productive reentry into society.

Researchers have discovered that perhaps as many as 70% of children from high-risk environments survive and are able to "work well, play well, love well, and expect well" in spite of potentially damaging odds (Benard, 1993). The resiliency perspective asks why young people stay healthy, what the child's total environment has to do with that health, and what can be done to insure the child's well-being. Instead of only providing an ambulance for those who have driven off the cliff, the resiliency movement is more interested in putting up roadblocks.

We know what the roadblocks are. In a study of 47,000 students in grades 6-12, Peter Benson (1993) identified 30 internal strengths (e.g., achievement motivation) and external supports (e.g., a mentor) that help protect our kids in a high-risk society. Benson found that as the number of assets increased, risk indicators (e.g., alcohol use, antisocial behavior, and school failure) decreased. He found that students who did one week of volunteer service for the community had reduced risk indicators. Not surprisingly, these protective factors contribute to a child's need for belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity.

Bonnie Benard (1993) suggests resilient youth have social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, and a sense of purpose and future. The community can protect its children by giving care and support through affordable housing and employment, by expecting its youth to be somebody, or by engaging youth in socially and economically useful tasks. The family needs to express affection, provide order, and set clear expectations. Giving their children a sense of future is another protective gift. Finally, Benard affirms the important role schools play in fostering relationships with teachers

and peers, cooperating with family, insuring success for all, and eliminating negative labels.

Dropout researchers (Newmann, 1992; Wehlage, Rutter, Smith, Lesko, & Fernandez, 1989) have moved away from searching for fixed negative characteristics of students—poverty, retention, family background, truancy, substance abuse—toward school practices that encourage stutents to persist until graduation. Damico and Roth (1994) analyzed this research and concluded that resilient or "persistent" students had caring teachers who liked them and liked teaching, structured successful learning experiences, conveyed a message the students could learn, varied instructional strategies, involved students, had small classes, and helped the students become test-smart.

Research makes it abundantly clear that developmental needs should drive interventions. Belonging is vital for young people, while suspension and expulsion continue to be the normal modes of discipline. Mastery is a key to resiliency, yet course failure and grade retention continue. Allowing students a voice in determining their education is essential; however, schools persist in regimenting everything from bathroom breaks to classroom discussion. Finally, research echoes our human need to be positively involved in our world, but still we squash the vitality of our students by choking them with useless worksheets and words.

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1986) said in order for a child to develop well, the child needs at least one person that is irrationally crazy about him or her. Relationship building is essential if we wish to reclaim our unattached youth. Fahlberg (1991) describes three modes of building relationships for preventing and treating attachment problems:

- *"Claiming" behaviors to foster inclusion.* In any group there are markers that determine who is an insider and who is out, the "we" and "they." Addressing persons by relationship terms (e.g., son), claiming physical space with possessions and photographs, engaging in ceremonies and songs, adoption rituals, clothing styles and insignia shared by group members—all serve to include persons in the family, gang, or tribe. Fahlberg puts particular emphasis on claiming activities with children who have been buffeted around by the foster care system.
- *Initiating positive interaction cycles.* This includes engaging in pleasurable activities, expressing affection, supporting children in pursuing their outside interests and in achieving goals, and participating in fun and joyful living. Increasing positive social interaction has a reciprocal positive effect. The adult bonds to the child, while the young person is emotionally and intellectually stimulated and feels lovable and worthy.
- *Support in periods of high arousal.* These periods might include a range of crisis situations, such as grief, illness, frustration, being hurt or injured, etc. Even physical restraint in moments of rage can serve to build positive ties. As the adult walks through these storms of life with the child and alleviates psychological or physical discomfort, bonding and attachment are enhanced.

> The care giver develops feelings of efficacy for meeting the child's needs, while the child develops trust, security, and attachment to the care giver.

Learning to build relationships with children in crisis is not easy. All of us are born with an instinctive urge to fight or flee when threatened. Children in crisis threaten untrained adults. But with understanding that comes with training, we can learn to be strong and resist those urges. The life space crisis reclaiming interventions developed by Fritz Redl (1966) and refined by Mary Wood, Nicholas Long (1991) and others provide a sophisticated application of those skills that support youth in periods of turbulence. Instead of walling off the youth in crisis, the goal is to surround the young person using the crisis as an opportunity to teach and build new skills. With work and mental toughness, adults can learn to see problems as opportunities. Reclaiming our youth can begin.

Today, Howard sits in a South Dakota nursing home, his sentence commuted by the governor. He plays cards with some of the staff, watches "Wheel of Fortune" and tries to convince visitors into taking him downtown for a smoke and sweet roll. He lives for his six cigarettes a day. For all that he has experienced, I am surprised at his sense of hope. "I heard about a black lady that lives in the South, he explained. She lived to be 118 years old. I want to live to be 118.... Before I die I want to see a Flamingo Dancer."

Bobby spends his time in the "hole"—a cell with a window that faces the exercise yard. He has been there for some time because, he writes, "I threatened to piss bomb a guard that was messing with me." He hopes for parole in 2007. In his latest letter, he wrote: "I have been watching the guys at recreation time every day lately and I am surprised.... It looks like a school play ground full of kids... By the way, I got a dictionary. Now I'm the 'hole professor.' I read and teach myself how to spell. I have learned to spell so many new words. The brain is on fire!"

In Howard and Bobby, I see a system and a way of thinking that is not serving anyone very well. I also recognize something in each that is worth reclaiming. It is no longer a mystery how we can reclaim youth at risk. Together we have the information, skills and methods to help our families, schools and communities find the inner strengths and mental toughness that are so necessary to meet our children's most basic needs. We know what can be done and what has to be done. What remains is to find the political and personal courage to reclaim our most difficult children. ■

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Chapter 2

Creating Caring Classrooms and Schools: Differences in Curriculum, Instruction, and Climate

Harbison Pool and Cherry C. Brewton

We have never found that tough-love approaches were very successful in administering schools or in teaching students. Yet, we have seen many who tried. In our experience, when *tough* has failed to work, the "logical" (and usually sincere and well-meaning) response has been *tougher*, especially in schools where most or all of the students were what one might classify as *at risk* (frequently associated with one or more of the following: socioeconomic disadvantage, a minority race, and/or an urban setting). The problem is, of course, that *tougher* has generally worked no better than *tough*, at least not on any long-term basis.

To the contrary, we find, it is what some might call a distinctly *softer* approach that does have some hope of making a difference. Surprisingly to some, this, too, is particularly so—or at least certainly no less true—where the student population is so-called *at risk*. We have observed that what really has the potential of "turning things around" is what we term *caring schools* and *caring classrooms*.

Good teachers and principals have been demonstrating their concern and respect for their students even before John Dewey (1902, 1916, 1938). But it was in the late 70s that Dorothy Kobak (1977; 1979a; 1979b) began explaining how teachers can create "a caring curriculum," develop children's *caring quality* (or "CQ"), and teach children and youth to engage in caring dialogues. More recently, Carol Gilligan (1984; Gilligan, Ward, & Taylor, 1988), Nell Noddings (1984, 1988, 1992, 1995), and others have advanced the cause. We suspect we need to be, like Maxine Greene (1990), where we recognize "caring as the ground of ethical existence" (p. 29).

The Concept of Caring

Through surveys we administered to—and structured interviews we conducted with—teachers, students, principals, supervisors, counselors, regional consultants, school secretaries, and others at elementary, middle-school, and high-school levels (Brewton & Pool, 1994b; Brewton, Pool, Tremble, & Yates, 1995), we discovered that most educators, school staff members, and students answer without hesitation when asked what the word or concept of *caring* means. Similarly, they respond readily to questions

asking them to describe a caring school, classroom, teacher, and principal; what school activities or teaching approaches lead directly to the development of a caring school or classroom; and what they can do to be more caring in their roles (e.g, "What could you do to be a more caring school secretary?").

As might be expected, we received a variety of response types and sophistication levels, but we believe it is fair to say that there were many common understandings. Definitions of *caring* from administrators include: (a) "Caring means an empathy, concern for another, without regard to race, sex, social status, or ability level." (b) "Addressing needs of all—group and individual—needs in an equitable manner." (c) "A feeling of warmth and concern for the general welfare of all." Examples of teacher responses are: (a) "Taking time to listen to a person and respond in a meaningful way." (b) "Being concerned for the child's well-being." (c) "Caring to me means that I'm interested and sincere about the welfare of the students in all areas."

Even young students were eager to express their comprehension of this term. Third graders thought of caring like this: (a) "Being nice to somebody, helping them out." (b) "To be kind and love people." (c) "If you do something for someone else, or they do something for you, they care." Typical responses from sixth graders included: (a) "Loving someone." (b) "It means feeling something about someone that makes you want to be there when they need help." (c) "To me it means willing to make an effort." In her interviews with more than 100 middle schoolers, Bosworth (1995) found that most were "able to articulate a multidimensional description of what caring means to them and to list a variety of activities in which they engage that constitute caring" (p. 692).

Caring Schools and Classrooms

Caring schools are inclusive, heterogeneous schools in which differences are celebrated; everyone is expected to achieve at a high level; and school leaders understand the importance of viewing every student as a capable, worthy person (Beck, 1994; Pool, 1996; Pool & Page, 1995; Solomon, Schaps, Watson, & Battistich, 1992). Caring schools have an ethic of caring (Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, & Steele, 1996; Noddings, 1988; Shann, 1990; Starratt, 1991) and are led by men and women who understand their responsibilities to students, teachers, and staff alike.

Success for All Students in Caring Schools and Classrooms

Caring teachers must be prepared to help accomplish what Darling-Hammond (1995) terms "restructuring schools for student success" (p. 153). They will need to teach for understanding and know well both their teaching specializations and their students. They must be prepared to attend to a wide range of cultures, learning styles, languages, and academic strengths that children and youth bring with them to school. They must listen to their students and understand how they grow and develop to grasp what in fact they are really capable of accomplishing and how they think and learn.

Caring teachers write off none of their students. They accept—and fully expect to reach—every individual. They recognize and engage classroom diversity (Casbon,

Schirmer, & Twiss, 1997)—different cultures (Flood, Hamm, Herrington, & Turk, 1993), males and females (Brewton, Barta, et al., 1995), etc.

A High Level of Involvement

Literally *everyone* needs to be involved if a truly caring school is to be achieved. Burrell's (1993) research discerned a need for academic and vocational teachers to define common teaching goals and to cooperate more fully than is normally the case. Weissglass (1996) notes the need to build caring relationships among colleagues if teachers are to be successful in coping with the stress of substantive change —in this instance, "transforming schools into caring learning communities" (p. 175).

In her work with staffs and students from 17 quite different public and private high schools, Montgomery (1994) determined that critical dimensions to building a strong sense of community in a school are "shared beliefs and interests, warm interpersonal relationships, democratic and participatory functional relationships (e.g., open communication, involvement in decision making), and incorporation of diversity" (p. 2). Counselors, security guards, and other nonteaching personnel may be able, Montgomery observes, to contribute significantly in this effort, but, like students, often feel powerless to do so. Students in her study believed that increased dialogue between students and staff would be helpful.

Caring Schools and Classrooms for At-Risk Students

At-risk students come from all walks of life. However, they are predominantly from families of lower socioeconomic status and overrepresented in ethnic and racial minorities and from single-parent homes. Programs for at-risk students must compensate to the extent possible for the home deprivations that most of them face by giving them access to resources they do not have at home. Such resources include a good place to study, support with homework assignments, and resource materials. Free summer and after-school programs, school libraries open late hours, homework hotlines, and peer tutoring are examples of interventions that may prove helpful. Teachers should be taught to expect high performance and success (Vacha & McLaughlin, 1992). Carducci and Carducci (1984) recommend a caring classroom as the best place to serve troubled, emotionally disturbed, disruptive students.

All agree, Kohn (1991) notes, that parents should teach their children moral concerns and social skills. Since, however, "such instruction—along with nurturance and warmth, someone to model altruism, opportunities to practice caring for others, and so forth—is not to be found in all homes" (p. 499), the school must step in. The only exposure some children will have to such values and training will occur if they are included in the school curriculum. If such occasion exists in both the school and the home, so much the better.

Nunn and Parish (1992) contend that at-risk students should be provided with: (a) opportunities to demonstrate successful competency within the school environment,

(b) carefully monitored experiences to see the good and bad relationships between their behaviors and the outcomes which result, (c) involvement and belongingness in the school setting, and (d) diverse learning experiences (in part to counter negative academic self-concept). According to Bateman and Karr-Kidwell (1995), critical components in programs designed to meet the needs of at-risk middle- and high-school students are a supportive school climate; a comprehensive, balanced curriculum; and effective, caring, enthusiastic teachers. Successful programs include tutoring-counseling; a positive climate founded on trust, optimism, and respect; good staff training; and a capable, dedicated school principal. Dougherty (1990) indicates that a worthy program to serve the needs of at-risk adolescents must begin with an attitude of caring on the parts of all members of the school's faculty and staff toward all students and their families.

McCarthy's (1990) findings indicate that at-risk sixth graders who are taught good decision-making and problem-solving strategies and to develop critical-thinking skills will be better able later to make intelligent decisions regarding drugs, sex, crime, etc. Students of diverse backgrounds and abilities can be integrated into cooperative-learning groups in which collaboration rather than competition is stressed. According to Sudzina and Douvre (1993), cooperative-learning strategies applaud both individual and group talents, cultures, and ideas. At-risk students are reluctant learners, they say, who can benefit from the positive interdependence fostered by cooperative learning, provided there is still individual accountability. Our study of cooperative-learning strategies in middle-school math and science found this method successful with almost all teachers and virtually all at-risk and other students in urban, suburban, and rural schools (Brewton & Pool, 1994a; Pool, Brewton, Jenkins, & Griffin, 1995).

Teaching a Caring Curriculum

Davenport, Jaeger, and Lauritzen (1996-1997) describe a curriculum of caring in which the *who* of schooling is as central as the *what* of curriculum. They contend that this student-centered, goal-based, contextual, and negotiated curriculum sends a message of caring to learners. The fundamental premise communicates the value of life and how exciting it is to learn about it. Also, students demonstrate their caring for each other. They work together and help one another.

McDonald (1993), writing about a high school that is part of Ted Sizer's Coalition of Essential Schools network, recognizes that we need to rethink the idea of how teaching and learning are structured, especially at the high-school level. We will still need *courses*, McDonald acknowledges, but in addition there could be "something like" *projects*. The curriculum should not be entirely contained inside *subjects* and should link—rather than isolate—learning experiences. Teachers must "tune their judgments to common and high standards" (p. 485). Grouping patterns should be "more respectful of human diversity and potential than age-grading and tracking, and we'll need management systems that can sustain community better than hierarchy can" (p. 485).

Thematic Teaching and a Caring Curriculum: A Perfect Match

In our experience, a caring curriculum is usually, at least in part, integrated, with interdisciplinary subject matter—the way "content" is found in the real world. We believe thematic teaching and a caring curriculum are, in fact, perfectly matched.

A theme is an underlying idea; it is what is left after all else has faded away. It also unifies, pulls together into a meaningful whole (Sippola, 1993). Themes can—and generally should—integrate instruction. They draw different subjects together (in intradisciplinary and/or interdisciplinary treatments) around any given theme. The standard school curriculum is typically fragmented with no coherent theme. Thematic units can change all that.

Thematic teaching crosses the artificial boundaries educators often erect among subject matters by (a) integrating basic concepts, (b) offering various means for students to explore their individual interests and demonstrate their ability to understand and synthesize, and (c) relating learning to students' real world today and tomorrow. Teachers lecture far less, guide and facilitate far more. Students construct new knowledge instead of being passive receptors of teachers' offerings.

Good teachers have long used interdisciplinary treatments at the elementary level and, as Stephen and Varble (1995) state, the interdisciplinary approach is in keeping with the philosophical basis of the middle school. At the high-school level, where Noddings (1995) declares students "desperately need to practice caring" (p. 25), teachers who have a bit of imagination and are of like mind can decide to emphasize a certain theme in their individual classes. Themes, Noddings points out, which could be stressed in most subject areas include war, poverty, crime, racism, and sexism.

A Caring Curriculum to Serve an At-Risk Student Population

Guthrie (1993) speaks of schools that have restructured to serve at-risk students. These schools operate more effectively on four fronts at the same time: (1) curriculum and instruction, (2) governance, (3) professional development of teachers, and (4) coordination of community resources. Curriculum and instruction practices in restructured schools include: a more practical curriculum with "real-world" applications; integrated thematic units and projects; and heterogeneous grouping so that all students can have access to the enhanced curriculum.

Teachers must change the way (a) in which they relate to at-risk students and (b) in the curriculum and methods they use. This is especially true, according to Gentile and McMillan (1991), when teaching literacy skills, the lack of which is a major factor in students' decisions to drop out of school. Literature, they say, can be used "to teach text structure and higher-order thinking" (p. 75).

Students are asked to link their own background with the school curriculum. At-risk students bring many assets with them to the classroom; these strengths must be recognized, prized, and taken advantage of by teachers. These students enter the schoolhouse door equipped with experiences and knowledge of any number of polarizing themes (good and evil, love and indifference, belonging and alienation, etc.) that can be

tapped. At-risk students are often forced to devote great amounts of school time to endless drill and remediation efforts which rarely work, are tediously boring for both students and teachers, and often do almost irreparable damage to the development of healthy student-teacher interactions. Teachers can draw upon these themes in helping students ask questions and seek answers that relate to their home culture and the knowledge they bring to school with them. The answers they find will guide their thinking before, during, and after reading (Gentile & McMillan, 1991).

A caring curriculum should be challenging, not watered down or "dumbed" down for any student. Of course, it should be designed with student inputs and involvement and in keeping with each child's or youth's needs and developmental level. Conventional wisdom has it that learning, especially for low-achieving students, "should be simplified, failure-free, presented in predetermined steps, and extrinsically rewarded" (Lewis, Schaps, and Watson, 1995, p. 554). Clearly, this is wrong thinking, but thinking which may take time to correct.

Exemplary teaching, a sound curriculum, and caring education are, we believe, good pedagogy whether working with a solely at-risk group, a heterogeneous class, or a privileged and/or gifted class. Of course, as previously stated, worthy teachers will always make their curriculum developmentally appropriate for all members of their class, an undertaking which will, generally, necessitate differentiating instruction to serve and accommodate differences in ability, background, interest, and learning style.

Building a Caring School Climate

The climate in a caring school is a warm, inviting place. There is fun abroad. Why? Because learning *is* fun, especially if it occurs in a caring, positive, upbeat, supportive environment. Indeed, genuine learning is more likely to occur in such an atmosphere. Lewis, Schaps, and Watson (1996) indicate that a caring classroom does *not* eschew criticism, challenge, risk taking, or mistakes (by teachers or students), but *does* ultimately enjoy an "academic edge" (p. 16).

Noddings (1988) believes that we must provide more time for teachers and students to become a learning community if we really want to foster growth in children and develop a caring citizenry. To this end, she recommends that elementary teachers remain with their students for 3 years. Similarly, in high school students would, for example, take the entire math sequence with the same teacher.

In a caring classroom, according to Carducci and Carducci (1986), emphasis should be placed on understanding internal motivating forces. They say the caring classroom calls for an approach which stresses ways to meet both teachers' and students' needs in the classroom environment. Specifically, they advocate the use of William Glasser's (1984) control theory. The student chooses his or her behavior, this theory maintains, and can thus learn to select an alternative. The teacher explains to the student how to negotiate a solution which will satisfy both their needs. "Teachers," Carducci and Carducci contend, "can change how they teach and encourage, and students can change their thinking and adopt more effective need-fulfilling behavior" (pp. 16-17). This,

they insist, makes more sense than behavioristic responses and will lead to positive long-term change.

Shann (1990) finds that caring schools can and should lead both to higher rates of prosocial behavior and to higher student achievement. According to Bosworth (1995), most schools are dominated by strategies for coping with negative or "uncaring" student behaviors, while programs that promote "caring values, attitudes, and behaviors by providing students with opportunities to discuss caring, to demonstrate caring to others, and to participate thoughtfully in caring relationships with peers and adults are scarce" (p. 686).

In a caring school students learn not only to care for—and respect—one another, but develop skill in conflict resolution (Combs, 1981; Kohn, 1991). Noblit, Rogers, and McCadden (1995) comment that teachers in a caring school would have more "time and 'permission' to talk and listen to their students and colleagues and to attend to their needs" (p. 685). After all, they observe, to focus on caring relationships is to be "true to our beliefs [in America] about how we should be with others" (p. 685).

Caring Teachers and Principals

Over the years, we have heard and read parents' moving accounts of the difference caring teachers can make in children's lives (e.g., Bachand, 1987). We have learned how teachers can help students to care for one another to good effect (Kohn, 1991). We have read Noblit's (1993) assertion that power and caring are connected. A number of authors have helped us see that there is nothing mushy or weak or superficial or irrational or unduly tender about caring (Combs, 1981; Marshall et al., 1996; Noddings, 1992).

Our research confirms what other studies show regarding what students and teachers want: (1) Teachers and students long for a more caring environment (McDermott-Murphy, 1994). (2) Students place great stock in having caring teachers, even in situations in which they are, at least at first, unable—or unwilling—to reciprocate with socially appropriate behavior of their own (Tice, 1995). (3) And, finally, teachers want principals who are caring (Richardson, Lane, & Flanagan, 1996; Tice, 1995).

Principals (and assistant principals) can also do much to generate and foster caring classrooms in their caring schools. They can facilitate the development of pride and togetherness among students, teachers, and even parents (Krause, 1985). They can develop an ethic of caring and support teachers who see their "purpose as educators . . . to nurture children and teach them to be caring, moral, productive members of society" (Marshall et al., 1996, p. 271).

Principals can (a) help create a climate of caring in their schools, encouraging increased community participation, cooperative learning, and good action research as to what their particular schools' needs are; (b) empower teachers to set their own goals and "coach" them through developmental supervision; and (c) raise self-esteem in students and teachers by helping them to set high expectations for the school and high standards for *all* students (Courtney, 1992). In fact, Courtney states, the principal's leadership "has been identified as a critical factor in promoting care and organizational

health in a school" (p. 123).

Caring principals are visionary and pro-family. They support the idea of having schools serve as centers for child and family services (Soriano & Hong, 1997). They recognize the need to eliminate needless bureaucracy and time-consuming, costly, and even destructive policies that sometimes postpone or even deny needed services to children and youth in need, on occasion with tragic consequences (Pool & Pool, 1996). In the few instances where this sort of concentration of child and family services has been realized, it is almost always because of the efforts of principals who are dedicated to the idea of seeing students get what they need when they need it.

We believe, with Beck (1994), that administrators guided by an ethic of care will certainly embrace the role of instructional leader, since they will necessarily recognize that schools that promote optimum development will be those in which students are well-taught. Such principals are creative, capable, caring, and conscientious. They view themselves both as learners who "continually strive to develop their knowledge base" and as teachers who "work to transform interactions into pedagogical opportunities" (p. 88).

Caring teachers and principals are caregivers (Courtney & Noblit, 1994; Noddings, 1984), but, at least the ones we have seen, are in every way real human beings. They make mistakes, but they are most often errors of commission, not ones of omission. Caring teachers and principals are innovative and risk-taking, their courage prompted by the desire to find better, more humane ways of helping students to succeed, no matter what the odds, and tempered only by their unwavering determination to do nothing that will ever threaten the well-being of any child or youth.

Parting Thoughts

We agree with Kohn (1991), where he says that the school is an obvious and logical choice in which to help our children and youth to care about, empathize, and aid other people. How then, can it be, he laments, "that the active encouragement of prosocial values and behavior—apart from occasional exhortations to be polite—plays no part in the vast majority of American classrooms" (p. 499). How, indeed! We propose to turn this around.

Good teachers and principals everywhere know that students can be reached. They have seen it occur. Even at-risk, difficult, impoverished, and troubled students can have good moments, experience a measure of success, glimpse a bit of the joy of learning. We are convinced, beyond a reasonable doubt, that, when the quality of caring permeates the curriculum, instruction, and climate of our schools and classrooms, the number of these moments and the extent of such success will be extended substantially. We dedicate ourselves to this task. Will you join us? ■

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Chapter 3

Listen Up! Hear the Voice of Our Youth!

Sheronde Glover and Sonni Herrington-Jackson

What are our youth saying? Adolescence, historically has been a time of confusion and self-exploration. Youth are often asking the questions: "Who am I?" and "Who will I become?" Peer pressure is high and self-esteem often is low. Youth are confronted regularly with issues of self-discovery and social experimentation in their increasing efforts to become more comfortable with themselves, their environments and their social circles. Experimentation, good or bad, may include: dating, new friends, drugs, and alcohol.

Although many adults have come to view adolescence as a difficult time, too many dismiss the notion that being a teenager is hard. According to a survey, Who's Who Among High School Students, it was found that like adults, today's teens have a lot weighing on their minds such as affording college, crime and drugs, sexual violence, their economic future, and their family life ("*It's Lonely At the Top,*" 1997). Keeping this in mind we must not ignore the fact that adolescents of today tend to grow up faster, are confronted with issues sooner, and move at a faster pace than the previous generation of adolescents. In this same survey, more than 26 percent of youth surveyed stated that they have considered suicide as the answer to difficult problems. The cause of this distress? Our teens are dealing with the *pressures* of growing up *too fast.* Attending school, for example is not as easy as it used to be. In 1940, the top discipline problems in our public schools were: talking, chewing gum, making noise, running in the halls, getting out of turn in line, and wearing improper clothing. In 1990, the top discipline problems are: drug and alcohol abuse, pregnancy, suicide, rape, robbery, and assault (Russell, 1996). Today's teens more than ever have to worry about too much, too fast. The survey concluded that today's high achieving teens worry about their personal safety in the halls at school, the increasing drug problem among their peers, sexual time bombs such as date rape, abortion and pregnancy, and their precarious financial and educational futures ("*It's Lonely At the Top,*" 1997). In a 1993 Georgia Risky Behavior Survey, it was found that of youth responding, 67% had tried smoking, 76% had drank alcohol, and 66% had engaged in sexual intercourse. Our youth, more than ever before are involving themselves in behaviors that are both negative and dangerous. Crime and violence, high on the list of negative and dangerous behaviors, is at an all time high. In the first half of 1995, reported murders dropped 12 percent. There was also a one percent decrease in overall reported crimes and a five percent

drop in violent crimes. But among youth aged 14 to 17, the murder rate more than doubled in the past decade (*"Youth Want to Do Something,"* 1996). Crime, negative images, and more have affected the lives of our youth. Many carry weapons, skip school, use different routes to and from school and have changed friends or let their grades drop according to a nationwide poll (*"Youth Want to Do Something,"* 1996). For many this information may be shocking, but as we begin to acknowledge it, we must realize that these facts, these behaviors, and these issues have become the *voices* of our youth.

These voices, negative or positive, are calling out to us, as adults, teachers, role models, mentors, and even partners, to assist and help pave the way. Youth today have fallen victim to the many ills of our society and are faced with the pressures of making some very hard decisions. They must often contend with: intense peer pressure, inadequate supervision and guidance, the difficulty of transitioning from a child to an adult, and violence. Interestingly enough though, a nationwide poll found that many young people are willing to join programs that would help reduce or prevent crime. Despite finding that the carefree attitude synonymous with the teenage years has been replaced by concerns about personal safety and crime and violence, the poll provided reason for hope. More than 80 percent of junior and high school pupils surveyed said they were interested in joining one or more community-based programs (*"Youth Want to Do Something,"* 1996). Our youth are ready and willing to become involved, but there are too few programs which include young people. Together we must begin to form partnerships and collaborate with each other to work out the issues that confront us all. We must begin first by recognizing and then responding to the role we play in the lives of our youth.

Are We Hearing?: The Roles We Play

Structurally, our families, communities, and neighborhoods have changed and have deprived our youth of the nurturing and supportive adult relationships they have had in the past. One of our primary roles as an adult is to begin to join together and form partnerships with our youth. The ideal situation in a partnership would be an equal power balance between young people and adults; but this is not reality. Striving for a common goal develops partnerships. To find this balance of utilizing each other's strengths, the adult and youth need to understand their individual roles.

The Adult Roles

Many adults practice adultism (Bell, 1996) which means disrespect for young people based on the assumption that adults are better than them. These behaviors hinder effective youth and adult partnerships. When working with youth, we should consider the guidelines explained in this section.

Listen attentively to young people and ask questions. Most people can find someone who will give advice or express opinions. But it is much harder to find someone who will suspend his or her own judgment and really listen. This provides the opportunity for youth and adults to express their beliefs and feelings honestly, without fear of

rejection. Adults may not agree, but can demonstrate that they accept youth's feelings and can show acceptance through their tone and their words. Adults can help by simply listening, asking thoughtful questions and giving youth an opportunity to explore their own thoughts with minimum interference.

Validate their thinking and allow them to make mistakes. Adults can not come with the attitude that their ways are better or that young people need to be rescued. Young people and adults have to convey a sense of respect and equal dignity in the partnership to win trust. Adults may help them explore alternative solutions and communicate faith in their decision through words, gestures and tone of voice.

Invest personal commitment in the partnership. Relationships take time to develop, preferably six months to a year. Adults must be willing to take time to get to know youth and learn new things that are important to them. They have to be invested in this partnership long enough to make a difference and to let youth know they care.

The Youth Roles

In terms of participation in partnership with adults, young people have the capacity and responsibility to contribute to a positive relationship with adults as explained in this section.

Be an equal part of the partnership. This partnership belongs to both the youth and adult. Therefore all members should have an equal opportunity to join in the decision-making process. This gives youth a voice to advocate feelings, needs, and issues of other youth which allows youth to have a sense of ownership. This will teach them to be responsible, decisive, and goal-oriented.

Participate collectively with adults in a cooperative and respectful manner. Partnerships are team oriented so that everyone has an equal voice. Youth should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner which shows consideration for others. This will teach them how to respectfully express their feelings.

Share in open dialogue. Youth must be willing to let down their guards in order to build a trusting relationship with adults. By doing so youth may find friends and confidants.

Individuals and programs can work to help young people develop their goals for life, practice decision-making, exercise judgment, and grow in leadership. With full participation and understanding of roles, both adults and youth can begin to celebrate and accept the diversity of each other.

Answering the Call: Why Not Start a Youth Group?

Volunteerism, for centuries has been a way for many to unselfishly give back to their communities while bringing about self-fulfillment. Even now, there is national attention being given to the need for people to embrace the act of volunteerism. There are many ways to become involved and many ways that we can individually give back. What we must begin to look at and weigh, though, is how individually (based on our own needs, time frames, and personal circumstances) we can offer our time and service.

A youth group is a great way to begin to form partnerships between adults and youth. A youth group offers a setting in which both partners—adults and youth, are able to interact, exchange ideas, share feelings and experiences while learning from one another. Some benefits that a youth group offers both adults and youth are explained in this section.

Provides an opportunity to learn and connect with others. A youth group offers youth and adults a chance to get together and discuss social issues. Youth often feel they are alone if they have concerns or problems. Getting together and discussing issues with others helps them to realize they are not alone. Youth are also able to get information and learn from others. Youth can offer each other support and get to know others along the way. This allows for increased social skills often lacking among many young people.

Provides a forum for open discussion. Youth have feelings and a lot to say about their environment, the world, and what's going on today. A youth group provides youth an opportunity to discuss these issues in a non-threatening way with others who are in a position to aid and advise them. Youth often talk among themselves about concerns which may put them in a position to receive misleading advice. Having a group that allows youth to discuss *their* issues with appropriate feedback will assist them in making more thoughtful and informed decisions.

Provides an opportunity to support youth in a less time consuming activity. Many adults want to do something to work and help our youth. Often it is a struggle handling everyday demands such as job and family. This may make it difficult to give back to the community. A youth group gives adults the opportunity to provide their experience and knowledge in a less time consuming manner.

Provides cohesion for all involved. Good role models and good friends are important in the lives of our youth. When working together, adults and youth begin to form a bond with each other. A youth group allows both adults and youth to be a part of a united team that offers support to each on both ends. In time, regular attendance from both adults and youth will be noticed. Together decisions will be made, activities will be enjoyed, and problems will be solved.

Provides the opportunity to affect a variety of lives. Helping one person in life is a great fulfillment, but having the opportunity to affect the lives of many is also very fulfilling. The youth group will affect and touch many lives in small, but significant ways.

Aids in bridging the gap among generations. In forming a partnership, adults and youth begin to understand one another. Basically, they want to achieve the same goals, happiness and success. With adults and youth working together they begin to exchange dialogue and ideas and to respect and appreciate each others' differences.

Conclusion

Statistically, some of the issues facing our youth are pregnancy, violence, crime, illegal drug use, and school dropout. In hearing this, the role we play is to provide love, guidance, and standards, and to serve as role models and partners to our youth. To

answer the call we must begin to collaborate and work in conjunction with our youth by allowing them opportunities to participate in our communities. *So listen up and hear the voices of our youth!* ■

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Chapter 4

The Road 'Less Traveled By': Collaborating With Teens for Community Change

Ella M. Williamson

Two Roads diverged in a yellow wood...
and I took the one less traveled by,
and that has made all the difference.
Robert Frost

As we approach a new century, the future of many young people is very bleak. Despite countless efforts to steer them toward positive activities, many youth still find themselves on an all too commonly traveled road to destruction, suffering, and wasted lives. In *The State of America's Children Yearbook* (1995) published by the Children Defense Fund, records show that every 9 seconds a child drop out of school, every 10 seconds a child is reported abused or neglected, every 14 seconds a child is arrested, every 25 seconds a baby is born to an unmarried mother, every 32 seconds a baby is born into poverty, every 34 seconds a baby is born to a mother who did not graduate from high school, every 1 minute a baby is born to a teen mother, every 2 minutes a baby is born at low birthweight, every 3 minutes a baby is born to a mother who received late or no prenatal care, every 4 minutes a child is arrested for an alcohol-related offense, every 4 minutes a child is arrested for a violent crime, every 4 minutes a child is arrested for a drug offense, every 10 minutes a baby is born at very low birthweight, every 15 minutes a baby dies, every 2 hours a child is killed by firearms, every 4 hours a child commits suicide, and every 7 hours a child dies from abuse or neglect.

Our political system has responded to many of these tragic moments for children by creating stiffer penalties like the "three strikes" legislation, building more prisons, mandating work requirements and limiting financial assistance to prevent welfare dependency, and declaring war on children through the "Contract with America." What we have failed to realize is that public policy cannot mandate or legislate behavioral change, but politicians do have a responsibility to use public policy to build a safety net around all children.

The so-called "new morbidities" of youth have been given increasing attention over the last several years. The most prominent causes of morbidity and mortality are violence and injury; sexuality problems, pregnancy; learning difficulties, illiteracy and school failure and drug abuse (Farrow, 1992). Many of these health-risk behaviors,

which contribute to the leading causes of mortality, morbidity, and social problems among youth and adults, often are established during youth, extend into adulthood, and are interrelated.

Collaboration: Youth Service Agencies, Communities, and Youth

Youth service agencies encompass a large variety of organizations and associations that have been established to meet the needs of young people as they progress from childhood to adulthood. In general, the programs of youth service agencies strive to accomplish one or more of four basic objectives for youths and the larger society: goal attainment, adaptation, integration, and tension management. Goal attainment programs, which help youths develop skills, values, and behavioral patterns to facilitate their transition to responsible adulthood, including programs that impart academic or vocational skills, inculcate democratic ideals or values, and foster conventional patterns of prosocial behavior. Adaptation programs strive to help youths adjust to significant changes in their families, neighborhoods, communities, or other sectors of society. They include programs that prepare youths to deal with such matters as parental divorce, the death of a friend or relative, and changing demographic patterns in schools or neighborhoods. Integrative programs attempt to link youths with key units of the larger society and promote contacts with peers from different ethnic or cultural backgrounds, help qualified youths to find jobs, and provide aftercare for youths who have been discharged from residential treatment facilities. Tension management programs, which seek to foster constructive controls for troubled youths, are found primarily in the mental health and juvenile justice sectors (Feldman, 1987).

Although, youth serving agencies have focused on these four basic objectives for youth they have failed over the years to involve the community. John McKnight (1995) defines communities as collective associations. They are more than and different from a series of friendships. One can have a friendship with a labeled person in an institution, for example, but that does not mean the person has been incorporated into the community. A community is more than just a place. It comprises various groups of people who work together on a face-to-face basis in public life, not just in private.

If we are to change the fate of America children, we must utilize the talents of young people on a regular basis to help promote community uniqueness and capitalize on its strengths (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). In addition to collaboration between agencies, we must also collaborate with young people to develop projects and to set priorities which may lead to solutions. Youth-adult partnerships should be a priority because they offer a way to involve neighborhood youth in positive activities with positive role models and to intervene early with children and youth at risk.

What Role Should Teens Play?

Certainly, teens have an important role to play in community change. Teens can be used to help address important issues—such as teens pregnancy, self-esteem, physical safety, teen violence, tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. We must find ways to creatively

involve teens in the system. They should be actively involved in decisions that affect them and provided opportunities to interact positively with their peers. Papell (1977) noted that there was little recognition of youth as an integral sector of the population from the colonial period until 1860. Toward the end of this time, rapid industrial growth, immigration, urbanization, and other changes transformed the family from a producing to a consuming unit, creating social conditions that raised concerns about the role of youths.

Adolescence is the time of life between puberty (ages 10 to 13 years old) and adulthood. It is period in which critical sexual development and social and emotional growth takes place. Adolescence is not necessarily the turbulent years but the years of confusion. Adolescents are searching for their identity. Sexual, religious, and racial issues, unquestioned by 11 and 12 year olds, are subject to reevaluation, new understanding, and revision by adolescents. In this regard, adolescents ask themselves, again without being fully aware they are doing it, several critical questions: "Who am I?" "What do I believe in?" "When should I stand up for what I believe in?" "Where am I going?" "How am I going to get there and with whom?" They ask and answer these questions through the clothes they wear; their hairstyles; the heroes, friends, and enemies they select; the cliques they form; the fads they follow; and the causes they support (Comer & Poussaint, 1989).

Friendships and social relations are very important during this period. They tend to gravitate toward their peers and separate from their parents. The ideal of peer mentoring is very important during this time. Having a positive peer-to-peer mentoring relationships help reinforce parental, school and social values learned earlier in life. At about age 10 a child's peer group becomes one of the most important social forces in his life. Identifying with a group of kids can help children develop strengths and talents different from their families and discover information about themselves not have learned otherwise (Holt, 1995). From as early as age 2 kids are involved in healthy groups says Marilyn Seoal, dean of the Family and School Center at Florida's Nova Southeastern University and author of numerous books on child development. "Peer pressure is an influence that creates change or the desire for change and often that change is very positive" (Holt, 1995). Peers can applaud other children's achievement when they win a tennis tournament, encourage them to try out for the school play, or challenge them to study harder. Peers teach compromise in a way that parents and siblings can not. Another benefit of positive peer pressure is that it can actually help children to develop a sense of morality. Furthermore, peers provide a backdrop for the testing of values in the world, explains William Damon, a professor and director of the Center for Human Development at Brown University and author of *Greater Expectations: Overcoming the Culture of Indulgence in America's Homes and Schools* (1995).

Of course, this will not totally shield teens from negative influence but peer-to-peer mentoring makes sure kids have a positive support group which will help in their decision making process. Teens use positive peer pressure to watch out for the friends they care about so deeply (Holt, 1995). Also Artunian (1995) states that teenagers often

find themselves belonging to certain groups that share similar interests and values. Cliques can often lend support and good advice. However, some groupings may pressure one into drugs or lying. Teens can recognize if they are in the wrong clique when they feel pressured to dress or act in strict conformity; the group members discourage them from having other friends; they find themselves doing what they do not really enjoy such as openly insulting other kids to jut fit in.

Teens As Teachers: A Model Worth Modeling

Teens As Teachers (TAT), a tobacco use prevention education curriculum that utilizes teens as peer teachers and positive role models, was implemented in the Savannah/ Chatham public schools in January of 1997. After attending a one-day workshop, more than 51 teens presented a "stay tobacco free" message to more than 200 younger students. The teen participants completed pre-intervention and post-intervention surveys. All teen participants rated high in self-efficacy, anti-smoking attitudes, and positive anti-smoking opinions. After completing the curriculum and teaching experience, teens reported behavior changes such as asking someone not to smoke around them and trying to convince someone not to smoke.

TAT was developed by the American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation. It was designed as an intervention for upper middle and high school age students. Part of its success lies in another powerful prevention tool—its use of teens as role models to younger children.

Phase I: This phase was designed to prepare teens to teach tobacco-related subject matter, bolster self-efficacy, encourage independent decision making, develop presentation and critical thinking skills, and reinforce nonsmoking as a societal norm. Non-traditional teaching methods were used such as role playing and group reporting. *Phase II*: Teens visited lower grade classrooms to make their presentations and led small group activities which provided the opportunity to interact with younger students.

An evaluation report of TAT (Moskowitz & D'Onofrio, 1993), conducted by the American NonSmokers's Right Foundation , indicated that concept of peer teaching was very successful. This program appealled to high school students for a broad array of reasons. The great majority who participated liked the program and felt they had benefitted from it. Overall, this evaluation demonstrated that this peer program made a positive contribution to the anti-tobacco effort.

Conclusion

Creating environments that reflect teen values will definitely produce change in the whole community. Such change, can be successfully planned, implemented and sustained only if there is a true partnership between local adults, youth, and the youth service organizations which control the resources. Youth-adult partnerships require knowledgeable leaders who recognize, appreciate, and respect the unique contribution teens can make to community projects. Teens should be equal partners in the collaborative process with adults. Leaders should listen to teens ideas and run their decisions through

them for review and endorsement. Their ideas and suggestions should be acted upon in a timely fashion to avoid teens developing a distrustful attitude toward the system. They should be kept involved in the collaboration process from start to finish and be encouraged to express their views. When our youth are allowed to work hand-in-hand with adults in positive partnerships, then we will begin to take the road "less traveled by" and that will surely make all the difference for the development of our communities and individual lives. ■

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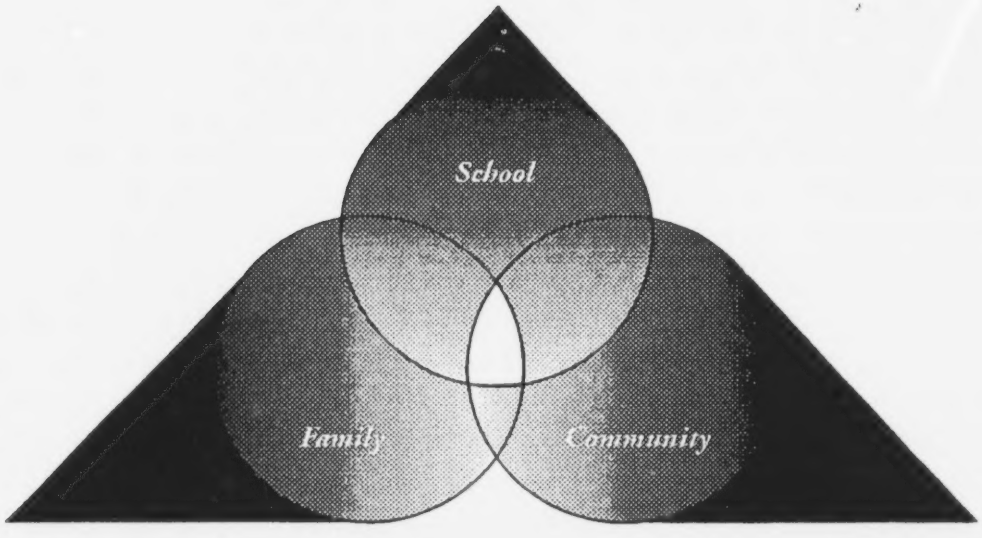
II. Partnerships for Elementary Students



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Chapter 5

Using Positive Action for the Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment of Youth At Risk

Carol Gerber Allred

The Positive Action program teaches students that what they do has a direct effect on how they feel about themselves, a message of profound importance for youth at risk. When students feel negatively about themselves, negative behaviors and outcomes are, by and large, inevitable. Poor self-concept is a major risk factor for drug and alcohol use, premature sexual activity, low achievement, poverty, and illegal activity.

A crisis exists in this society. Too many children and adults are lost to isolation and despair. We are paying an exorbitant price for it in dollars and in human suffering. These issues are just as true for adults as they are for children and adolescents, just as true for rural schools as for urban, just as true for wealthy schools as for poor ones, in large communities and in small. The solution must be systemic, universal, and visionary.

This crisis can be addressed directly at its core by the introduction of the Positive Action philosophy, concepts, and practices. Schools that use the Positive Action program have successfully turned their students away from violence and nonachievement and turned their students toward high performance, lowered disciplinary referrals, and a renewed sense of hope. Consider the following success story:

> Carl Benner's (elementary school) success story is directly linked to the Positive Action program. Our disciplinary rate was down over 75 percent in the first three years, and it dropped after that. Our aggregate test scores on the California Achievement Test quadrupled in the first three years, and they continue to grow.
>
> Kathleen Hood, principal of Carl Benner Elementary School

Carl Benner Elementary School is an inner-city school in Coatesville, Pennsylvania that was recognized as a Blue Ribbon School in 1994.

Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment

In the helping and caring fields, prevention, intervention, and treatment are, for the most part, approached with different programs, strategies, and practices, serving different political agendas, different outcome expectations, and different populations. Prevention

is served by the notion of getting the problem solved before it starts, usually by education in the early, formative years of kindergarten and elementary school. Intervention involves recognizing that problems are coming and designing programs that address the issues, usually when the problems are just becoming apparent during early adolescence. It involves both aspects of education and early treatment in its more benign forms.Treatment is the stage where problems surface with all their attendant horrors. Something has to be done forcefully and drastically, including incarceration, rehabilitation, and hospitalization, which is rivetingly expensive and heartbreaking. Prevention, intervention, and treatment are all one and the same in the Positive Action program. It makes a lot of sense to have one program address all three issues because students in the same class or the same school will fall into any of these categories at any given time.

For some students, the program will function as treatment: positive actions can change a lifetime of negative behaviors and help turn around a disastrous course of action. Other students will need intervention before problems reach a critical level. Positive actions and a strong self-concept steer students away from the worst of those excesses. Other students merely need to strengthen the good things they are already doing. It makes sense to do all three activities at once because teachers, social workers, and counselors may not know where students are in those processes and how they are doing.

It is important to identify early on what is missing and agree to what needs to be done. What is missing in this society at this time is doing positive actions. What we need to do is teach positive actions to children and adults and provide opportunities to practice them. One of the real benefits of the Positive Action program is that it works effectively and efficiently in the processes of prevention, intervention, and treatment.

When children are taught the Positive Action philosophy that we feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions and are taught what physical, intellectual, and emotional positive actions are and how to do them, they have a stable platform to base their whole life on. Positive actions can produce a pretty decent life.

If students have moved into the intervention phase, the issues are still the same. Students still need to know what positive actions are and how to do them. If they never learn positive actions they will never function in a positive way, and their lives will be exponentially more difficult and complicated. On the other hand, students who learn and practice positive actions have a greater chance of succeeding in an increasingly difficult environment, no matter what their history or economic status.

When late adolescents and adults reach the treatment phase, the issues are still fundamental: human beings cannot be rehabilitated until they understand the concept that they need to act in positive, responsible, thoughtful ways for the strength of their own self-concept and for the good of the people around them. It is extraordinarily helpful to have it spelled out concretely, practiced regularly, and reinforced in meaningful ways.

The most optimum time to teach positive actions is at the prevention level. The

Positive Action program becomes increasingly more powerful and effective when not only the individual practices positive actions but the family, the school, and the community also embrace positive actions. The philosophy that we feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions is universal, simple, and sound. It helps dilute the mixed messages received from the media, from unhealthy business and institutional practices, and from the darker side of society.

This systemic, comprehensive approach is uncommon. Fragmentation and competing programs and practices are too expensive and often do not provide the results that were sought. Revolutionary as it might sound, a universal, intuitive, common-sense approach works. Human beings do feel good about themselves when they do good things, and that feeling is likely to engender better behaviors. When behaviors change for the better, so do individuals and, therefore, so do families, schools, and communities. Consider the following report of success:

> A positive start is a great advantage at a school where over half of the children are from single-parent homes and over two-thirds qualify for reduced lunch. When people look at your school on a national level they want to know what steps you're taking to build character and to keep your school safe and drug free. Positive Action covers all that. Furthermore, when you're trying to work with parents and teachers to turn a school around, Positive Action is right there to help you. You don't have to reinvent the wheel.
>
> Beverly DeMott, Principal, Broward Elementary School in Tampa, Florida.

DeMott was named a National Distinguished Principal in 1993. Broward Elementary won the 1995 Redbook Best School award and was chosen as a National Blue Ribbon Winner in 1992.

Individuals, Families, Schools, and Communities

The Positive Action program started in schools, focusing primarily on the lower grades in the early 1980s, and has served over 7,000 schools nationally and internationally. However, Positive Action has a comprehensive impact that goes beyond the school as revealed in the following anecdotal report:

> Positive Action is the underpinning of how we deal with children and each other. You can hear it in the language teachers use daily. You can see it among the children as they discuss their problems on the playground instead of taking a swing at each other. You can hear it in the grocery store as parents describe appropriate behavior to their children with the 'Words of the Week.' It's impacting our school in a powerful way.
>
> Joe Fisher, Positive Action Coordinator of Mount Harmony Elementary School in Calvert County, Maryland.

It has become increasingly clear that boundaries between individuals, families, and communities are no longer well-defined, if they ever were. There is a dynamic responsibility between the individual, family, school, and community. What individuals do influences families, schools, and communities, just as family, school, and community influence the individual.

The Individual

Everything starts with the individual. Positive or negative feelings about self are the basis of self-concept. And positive or negative actions determine what those feelings will be. All choice is individual choice; what people decide to think and how they act is wholly personal. The whole point of the Positive Action program is to encourage individuals to make positive choices and do positive things. That's why the Positive Action program focuses, in large part, on teaching the effects of thoughts, actions, and feelings on the individual and encourages the practice and the reinforcement of doing positive actions.

The Family

Most individuals live inside families. Families influence what the individual does. If the desire is for individuals to behave well, then families must be nurturing and sustaining, positive and healthy. Three years ago *Positive Actions for Living* was published to encourage positive actions in the individual, to promote positive actions within the family, and to emphasize positive actions in the community. It is a must for parent resource centers and for libraries.

Positive Actions for Living is a book with forty-two lessons that are taught in three easy steps. Lessons includes lively stories and activities that are fun and educational and that serve the community. They provide opportunities for discussion, for family outings, and for practicing and reinforcing positive actions in the family.

The School

The school program is built on five building blocks: an effective school philosophy, a set of unit concepts, a classroom curriculum, a school-climate program, and a parent and community program.

The Positive Action program is based on the philosophy that you feel good about yourself when you do positive actions. This philosophy is illustrated in the Thoughts-Actions-Feelings Circle, a graphic that depicts how positive thoughts lead to positive actions, and how positive actions lead to a positive self-concept. Children as young as three grasp it instantly. This philosophy unifies all the activities and curriculum in the home, school, and community. Learning to read is a positive action, as is learning math and science. Doing positive actions is the basis of all success, and negative actions lead to failure.

A strong positive self-concept begins with identifying positive actions and then doing them. The Positive Action program teaches positive actions for the body, mind,

and feelings in a framework of six unit concepts. "Self-Concept: What It Is, How It's Formed, and Why It's Important" is Unit 1. It teaches what self-concept is and discusses how thoughts, actions, and feelings influence self-concept. It also defines success and happiness as feeling good about who we are and what we do. "Positive Actions for Your Body and Mind," Unit 2, focuses on the physical positive actions of eating nutritiously; getting enough exercise, sleep, and rest; and keeping body and home safe and clean. It also concentrates on the intellectual positive actions of being curious and learning new things, creating, making decisions, and solving problems in positive ways. "Managing Yourself Responsibly" is the concept for Unit 3. It teaches the positive actions of managing time, energy, talents, money, and possessions along with thoughts, actions, and feelings. "Treating Others the Way You Like to Be Treated," Unit 4, discusses love, empathy, respect, cooperation, kindness, fairness, and positive communication and provides a plan to resolve conflicts in positive ways. "Telling Yourself the Truth," Unit 5, presents material on recognizing strengths and weaknesses, doing what we say we will do, admitting our mistakes, refusing to blame others, refusing to rationalize, acknowledging the truth, and encouraging children and adults to 'lighten up.' "Improving Yourself Continually," Unit 6, is based on pursuing dreams and ideals by setting goals, believing in our potential, having the courage to try, turning problems into opportunities, and being persistent. The 7th unit is for review.

The Positive Action curriculum, focusing on specific positive actions and how to do them, includes a kit for each grade, K-12. The curriculum has scope and sequence, so the lessons and experiences build from year to year and from lesson to lesson. It is age appropriate and includes strategies and methodologies that address all learning styles.

Each kit includes lively, interesting stories, games, music, posters, and worksheets or workbooks. It comes fully prepared for teachers and is easy to teach. Over 1200 lessons are provided that are applicable for Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities and Title 1 programs. They focus on discipline, safety, self-esteem, drug-use prevention, premature sexual activity, violence, character development, academic achievement, goal setting, conflict resolution, problem solving, and community building.

The Community

The Positive Action parent and community program invites family and community partnership through well-designed activities for school, community, and home use. It encourages collaboration among schools, homes, businesses, and institutions, promoting community reciprocal partnerships. These partnerships focus on student learning, volunteerism, school decision making and advocacy, and collaboration with the community to resolve issues that affect student well-being and learning. *Positive Actions for Living* can also be used in parent resource centers, in libraries, and in parenting and support classes. It is effective in juvenile detention centers, homeless shelters, and migrant education. Everyone can come together to become the solution and not the problem.

Conclusion

In closing consider the comprehensive effect of Positive Action on both student academics and behavior:

> In 1992 after one year of Positive Action, average ITBS scores soared from the 49th percentile to the 75th percentile—a 26-point increase.
> Pierce Elementary School, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

> In 1995-96, the first year of using the Positive Action program, student fights decreased 76 percent and office referrals dropped 51 percent from the previous year.
> Park Avenue Elementary School, Nashville, Tennessee

It is imperative for the sake of efficiency and effectiveness that we unite the basics of prevention, intervention, and treatment. A crisis does exist: the minds, hearts, talents, and hard work of too many people are lost. That loss is exorbitantly expensive in dollars and in human suffering. Because the problem is huge and the stakes are so high, the solution must be universal, comprehensive, systemic, and visionary.

The Positive Action program is all these things. ■

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Chapter 6

A Micro-Community of Learners

E. LaWanda Ransom

A fifth grader discusses her job as a judge, telling the audience that she "oversees the court and makes sure the students understand the laws." She adds that she is tough on people who break the rules. Another student relates the importance of meeting deadlines so that the school's newspaper gets out on time. Yet another describes his job as the bank manager, making sure that deposit and withdrawal slips are accurate. The whole event (a presentation to describe the school's new program) is recorded, edited and reviewed by the student camera crew for the morning news.

These students along with the other fourth and fifth graders at the school are citizens of "Bearsville," a simulated community within the school. Five days per week for one hour the citizens can be found busily interacting in jobs at the IRS located on Teddy Bear Lane, making purchases in the Market Place in Washington Plaza and seeking job information at the employment office on News Flash Drive.

The growing concern from communities about the preparation of students to be employable must be addressed. Some students are not motivated by traditional methods of instruction and soon "tune out." Some are consumed with thoughts and concerns about things other than school. The relevance of skills taught in the classroom to real life application must be made clear to some students in order to keep them motivated. The question "Why do I have to learn this?" is one that everyone who cares about the future of children and the community should seek to answer. Student success should be the goal of parents, educators and the community.

Needs Assessment

During the Fall of 1995, the staff agreed to begin a one year study under the Schoolwide Title I program. The staff closely examined the school and its programs to assess the needs and to plan strategies for improvements. The study included looking at student achievement, and soliciting parent and teacher opinion. An analysis of state administered tests such as the Iowa Test of Basis Skills and the Georgia Writing Assessment for the previous three years was completed. The data indicated a need for improvement in reading and math for grades 2-5. Third graders were 14.5 percent below the state average of students who scored at the advance stage on the writing assessment. Student conduct for the previous year was examined. Student referrals to the principal's office for disciplinary reasons exceeded the district average. These findings indicated a need for the utilization of more effective methods of classroom management.

While examining areas of weakness, several grade levels felt that there was a need to maintain clear and consistent guidelines for teachers and students being "pulled out of the classroom throughout the day." Teachers were also concerned that the various programs within the school were not incorporated. Through grade level group meetings, teachers recognized strengths of the school as: the implementation of technology, adequate resources, weekly grade level planning and teacher attitude.

A parent survey was conducted to address issues to be explored during the development of a schoolwide parent component. About 75% of the parents wanted to know more about a variety of topics. Half expressed a willingness to do more volunteering and 45% suggested that they would participate in small-group discussions with other parents. After the needs were identified, goals were set to make improvements or changes.

Setting Goals For Improvement

Funding from the Title I budget provided the school with a consultant who worked with a committee of staff members to research programs and strategies that would meet the needs of the school. The committee developed and presented six goals to the staff for consideration: (a) Students will improve their achievement in reading, writing and literacy; (b) Students will improve their achievement in math; (c) Students will improve their achievement in science; (d) Students will improve their achievement in social studies; (e) Student discipline will improve; (f) Parent /community involvement will increase.

Background and Implications

Clincy (1995, p. 401) characterized the American education system at the beginning of this century as "disconnected and decontextualized." He also summarized changes occuring in business as moving away from scientific management to a system that expected employees to be decision makers. While the industrial system was forced to change, students were learning "out of context" and experiencing an education that was boring and irrelevant. Ladtke (1994) agrees that the educational environment must provide places for students to solve real problems. Real problems include managing money, making decisions, making meaningful contributions, working cooperatively with peers and setting goals.

George Richmond developed the idea of the microsociety over twenty years ago while teaching 5th graders in a Brooklyn classroom (Coad & Wilson, 1996). His frustration in the classroom led to the idea that he could transform his classroom into a student centered democracy. Students would no longer be passive receptors but rather, become engaged learners (Ludtke, 1994). The question of relevance of skills taught to practical application of the skills is important and integral part of the concept. Fry (1996) identifies two basic premises of a microsociety: That students take schoolwork more seriously when they understand how it relates to their life outside of school and that they learn by doing. City Magnet School opened in Lowell, Massachusetts in 1981. In 1987 the school's students were testing two years above the national norm in both

reading and math. Attendance at the school hovered around 96%, and during a six year period, only five children dropped out (Fedarka, 1992). In reporting improvements in literacy of students involved in the microsociety activities Richmond (1989, p. 234) wrote, "Children now write to be published and publish to be read, read to be informed, and use information to make intelligent decisions." A curriculum coordinator at Lowell expressed that it leaves a lasting impression on a child. Because they are empowered to create their own society they see themselves as capable people (Fedarka, 1992). The community became involved in Lowell's program. The Apple company donated computers. Parents who work in nearby corporations frequently visit the school to assist students. Others help by planning business ventures for the students (Richmond, 1989).

A very important trait of the concept is that it is not prepackaged and allows for creative input of staff and students. Teachers must work diligently to relate academics to microsociety activities. No prepackage of curriculum exists to speed the development of students as managers, legislators, judges healthcare providers and entrepreneurs (Richmond, 1989). The teacher's role in the community is to guide, support and advise the students.

This school within a school provides students an opportunity to take a more responsible role in their learning. The documented benefits of the microsociety program are closely related to the stated goals of the school and include: (a) Students score above grade levels in reading and math; (b) Student self-esteem and confidence improve; (c) Attendance among students and teachers increases; (d) Students develop a strong work ethic, which prepares them for college and employment; (e) Students acquire marketable skills and demonstrate responsibility for their own learning; (f) Drop-out and delinquency rates decrease; (g) Disciplinary problems decrease. The research and development of goals led the committee and staff to implement the microsociety program as a means for reaching the goals.

Community Involvement

The school's micro-community (micro-society) began by inviting various community members to share their expertise with the students. They met with students in small groups based on their career interest. The local lawyers, judges, health care professionals, postal workers, newspaper and bank employees discussed their job responsibilities and experiences and answered questions that the students had concerning the careers. A survey conducted at the beginning of school produced a list of parents in various career areas and those that were able to share experiences with the students. This is similar to a career class established at one microsociety school (Coad &Wilson, 1996).

Micro-community In Action

Fry's examination of micro-society schools revealed that they relate the activities

to academics through strands or areas of concentration. The strands can include government, economy, science, publishing and technology.

Under the micro-society model, the students go to work during the last period of the day. Two days are spent learning skills that relate directly to their jobs, on the other three days pupils perform job duties and interact in the community. Each student has a break (time off) to go shop at the marketplace to spend money, go to the bank, serve as jurors, pay fines, visit the health club, community clinic or attend a show. Students are required to wear name tags (Coad & Wilson, 1996). Students are fined for lost tags and are given a citation by Bearsville Security Patrol. Classrooms and large closets are transformed into businesses. The manufacturers make their goods in the lunchroom, and then sell to the retailers who have their businesses (marketplace) in the gym. Clincy (1995) stresses that all microsociety activities are real jobs. Students get paid and everyone has to hold at least one job.

In the Fall, a political campaign was held complete with banners, posters and speeches. The city's mayor swore in the mayor and aldermen for grades 3-5 of Bearssville after election results were final.

Legislative representatives were nominated from each class in grades third through fifth. These students are responsible for making and voting on laws, setting policies and consequences of violations. They also determine a minimum wage for employees. Other agencies under the government strand include the Internal Revenue Service, where auditors calculate taxes and offer incentives for deductions in addition to offering mini-workshops for all business bookkeepers. Students in Commerce Commission prepare checklists of compliance that each business must adhere to in order to receive a business license. In the Department of Revenue a database is used to keep track of all employee salaries and issue checks bi-weekly. Correspondences between citizens (K-5) and businesses are processed through the community's postal service.

A currency system is an important part of the economy. Students create and establish their own economy with its own currency and bank (Clincy, 1995). In Bearsville students use bear bucks in increments of ones, fives, tens and twenties. Students learn how to write checks and balance checking and savings accounts. The bank manager and tellers assist citizens with transactions during the posted operation times. The employment office provides information to students about job openings and required skills for specific jobs. Tests for some jobs are administered by the employment office staff. Some students are referred to Retraining/Detention by an advisor for counseling, retraining and new job placement when adjustment to a job or to the community becomes difficult. A student who is removed from society and his peers may also perform community service by tutoring students in lower grades.

The other businesses include a newspaper that publishes creative writing submitted by students in all grades, reports special events and solicits ads from other businesses. Students are subpoenaed to appear in court to be witnesses or serve as jurors. Attorneys are hired to represent citizens who receive citations for violation of community rules. The employees of WCTA 6, the television studio, produce a daily morning show and

create commercials for the businesses. In the marketplace (mall) citizens can shop at student owned businesses such as Beary Best Card Shop, Holiday Boutique, Names-N-Things, and Bear Jewelers. They can also purchase snacks at the food booth. A spring Job Fair conducted by the citizens helps the rising fourth graders narrow their job search during the Fall.

Conclusion

Educators, parents, and community members have the awesome responsibility to ensure that children are successful and able to make positive contributions to the community. Many times traditional methods alone are not enough to challenge and motivate students. Educators must be free to implement or develop programs that will meet the needs of the students in their care. The micro-society program allows young children to practice and develop skills that are necessary at a time when they are receptive to new challenges.

The first year at our school involved a lot of hard work, some frustration but mostly satisfaction. There are many changes that can not be measured in numbers. Nothing has been more gratifying than to hear students discuss their jobs, work cooperatively to solve problems and anticipate a new school year. Leaders have emerged among students who might otherwise be labeled boisterous and unruly. Parents come into the school more often asking questions about the jobs their children talk about so much at home and to offer their help. There is a new understanding and appreciation of the careers and jobs of parents and community members. Insights into the importance of reading, math, writing, technology, and social studies has motivated many students to consider how and why they need them. The aim of education is learning. It gives students a view of the real world, encourages them to set goals and learn what it takes to be successful. We are providing an environment to create a Micro-community of Learners. ■

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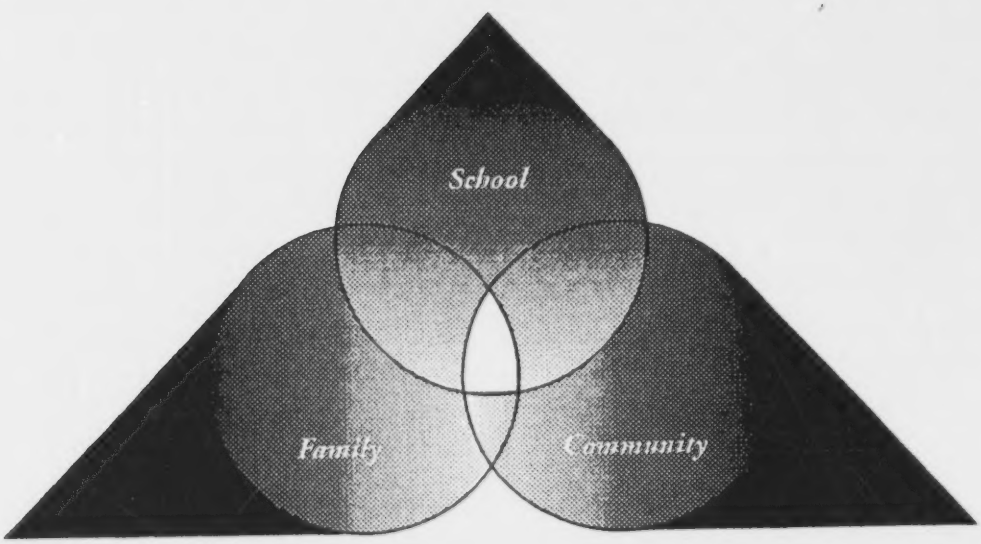
III. Partnerships for Middle School Students



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Chapter 7

Involving Minority Parents of At-Risk Middle Schoolers

Barbara G. Romine and LaTonya Gooden

There are children who have experienced more conflict and tragedy in their young lives than many adults. Many of these children bring serious baggage to our schools everyday. This baggage includes behavior problems as well as academic problems. There are students who lack the motivation and self-discipline necessary for prosocial behavior and academic achievement. While high incidence of discipline and academic problems were once thought to only exist in inner city schools, these problems have spread to rural America. Educators can no longer do it alone. Educating America's youth must be shared by the schools, the community, and most importantly, the parents.

Research consistently supports the idea that parent and family involvement increases student achievement and success. Anne Henderson and Nancy Berla have developed a series of publications citing more than 85 studies to document the profound and comprehensive benefits for students, families, and schools, when parents and family members become participants in their children's education and their lives. These publications include: *The Evidence Grows* (Henderson, 1981); *The Evidence Continues to Grow* (Henderson, 1987); and *A New Generation of Evidence*: The Family Is Critical to Student Achievement (Henderson & Berla, 1995). Parents' love, care, support, and approval are fundamental needs of all children. Although families of the 90s differ in many ways, they share one common element. They are the *key* to their child's successful achievement in school.

An eighth goal has been added to *America's Goals 2000*. It states: *"Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children"* (1997).

This article describes a rural school in southeast Georgia where the teachers and staff are working hard to achieve the eighth National Education Goal. They were noticing that especially their minority students were falling further and further behind academically and behavior problems were on the increase. Phone calls, notes to parents, and traditional parent/teacher conferences were *not* fixing the problems. Teachers knew *they had to reach out to parents.*

A Critical Situation

The staff and teachers at Willow Hill Elementary School realize that parents are a resource that must be tapped and cultivated consciously and consistently. Minority

parents are targeted because the enrollment at the school is mostly minority children from low socio-economic backgrounds. Minority children at Willow Hill also score significantly low on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, a standardized test that is required of all students.

Following several in-depth looks at parental involvement at Willow Hill, the staff began to question the lack of support from minority parents. They met and brainstormed several possible reasons why they believed minority parents did not visibly participate in their children's education. Some reasons included: (a) parents' low levels of education, (b) parents' feeling of intimidation, (c) lack of parenting skills, (d) breakdown of the family nucleus, (e) parents repeating the non-support of their own parents, (f) parents' lack of knowledge of the importance of education, and (g) parents feeling threatened in an academic setting. For hypothetical reasons "b" and "g" became the focus of the discussion. It was decided that the situation had become critical. Teachers needed to find ways to break down the wall that divided the school and parents. For help, several members of the staff visited other schools facing similar problems. Eugenia Hamilton School in Macon, Georgia offered the most assistance. Teachers were encouraged to "think out of the box" about the situation. If the parents will not come to the school, then *the school must go to the parents*.

A Plan

The first activity occurred during teachers' pre-planning days at the beginning of the 96-97 school year. Staff members boarded school buses and went into minority communities. It was believed that by seeing the children's neighborhoods, teachers would become more sensitive to their needs. As the faculty traveled through the communities, they stopped, chatted with parents about their children and the new school year, and distributed roasted peanuts and lemonade. Parents were receptive and friendly, but when school started teachers did not see any changes in parental involvement.

A Breakthrough

Under the leadership of the late Dr. Frank Brocato, interim Superintendent of the school district, the staff at Willow Hill decided to meet parents on neutral turf. They decided to hold a parent forum in a community church. Once again, faculty were reaching out to parents. Several leaders of black civic and professional groups were invited to attend the first meeting. Representatives from the Ministerial Alliance, the African-American Women's Coalition, the Black Women of Profession, and the National Advancement of Colored People met with Dr. Brocato and the staff in September at the Fourth Street Church of God, the hub of a small, black community.

During the two hour, evening meeting (scheduled during regular church meeting hours), parents, members of the school staff, members from the Board of Education, ministers, principals, and African-American civic and professional representatives asked questions and shared ideas for helping minority children emotionally, socially, and academically. Teachers were pleasantly surprised at the number of parents present at

the meeting. The faculty and staff listened as parents expressed concerns. Parents made the following suggestions: (a) get places of employment and businesses to encourage parents to meet with teachers during the daytime hours about their child's school progress; (b) provide an orientation for parents and children before students enter Willow Hill; (c) provide more opportunities for minority children to display their talents; and (d) provide tips to improve students' test scores. One parent who mentioned the talents of black children also noted that often during school performances, black children are in the back rows. Teachers seemed unaware of this and were glad that it was brought to their attention.

Teachers learned that minority parents *do* care about their children and are interested in working with the school to improve the lives of their children. Parents were made aware of the available resources with tips for better study and reading habits which can be checked out from the school media center. By the close of the first meeting staff members believed that the most important thing had been accomplished. Parents' voices were heard. Parents felt comfortable in a neutral setting and were encouraged to speak their minds in a supportive atmosphere. Educators were listening.

This meeting and several thereafter, held in other community churches, have been very successful with high attendance and enthusiasm. Parents and teachers have shared and learned a great deal from each other as a result of these open forums.

However, Willow Hill's work is not complete. In addition to the church meetings, they continue to develop other strategies to increase parental involvement in addition to the church meetings. A parental involvement committee has been established. This committee is comprised of parents and teachers who attend training sessions to learn better communication skills. The school media center is stocking up on parental involvement resources including books, pamphlets, and videos. Other strategies the school utilizes include sponsoring parenting classes for all parents, sponsoring a "Bring Your Parent to School Day," preparing family dinners during Thanksgiving and Christmas, and maintaining close, consistent contact with minority parents. The school invites ministers from the community churches to visit and speak with the students. Newsletters and honor roll announcements are also sent to churches in order to provide students with recognition from their congregations.

Future parental involvement strategies include plans to provide staff development for teachers regarding procedures for conducting effective parent conferences, holding several activities such as a "Stone Soup" social for families, organizing parent/teacher athletic teams, making home visits to parents who are unable to come to school, honoring parents for their participation in school, sponsoring a community talent show, and creating a parent suggestion box.

As a result of on-going parent activities, Willow Hill teachers have gained more support from minority parents. Many parents have commented that the church meetings show parents that the school staff is committed to them and their children's success, not only in school, but in life. Teachers have learned that minority parents *do care and do want to be involved*! In many cases, they just do not know how. The key to getting

them involved is to establish positive communication and trust from the beginning of the school year. Most importantly, teachers must let parents know that their children are doing positive things in school and that teachers want to help children reach their highest level of success.

Results of these efforts reveal that communication and involvement can improve student performance and self-esteem of minority, at-risk students. Schools are realizing that it is up to them to find nontraditional means to involve parents, if schools are going to make a difference in children's lives. Teachers at Willow Hill have discovered that hard-to-reach parents *do* care about their children. The administration and staff of Willow Hill School plan to continue and increase their parental involvement efforts. The 3 C's—*communication, consistency, and common ground*—may be the answer to decreasing what seems to be an ever broadening gap between the school and minority at-risk parents. ■

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Chapter 8

Razzle-Dazzle Reading and Writing: Motivating for Empowerment

Patricia West Williams

As I began my teaching career in 1986, I was duped by the great American educational myth that teacher competence was evaluated by the number of "quiet" students found sitting in rows and "on-task" when administrators visited classrooms. After recognizing the problems that many students experienced trying to adapt to standard conventions of American English, I became hungry for something new and innovative to reach students who were enslaved as many of their ancestors had been just a few generations ago. They were disadvantaged because they were enslaved to illiteracy. Without the ability to read and write, one is left outside the mainstream, especially in a country like the United States where lines are drawn according to race, class, and gender. The knowledge of language entitles one to a place in the "culture of power" (Delpit, 1991). In class after class, I could identify adolescents who were not earning their tickets to economic, social, political, and cultural survival. They had become fearful young people—afraid of failure, full of anger and apathy, and totally unmotivated.

Rationale

In 1992, a challenging group of students made me realize that there had to be another way besides the traditional methods. With a few exceptions, most of the students in this particular class had been through the Juvenile Detention Center for various offenses. By the end of the year, the class size had been whittled down to ten. One had been expelled for threatening and grabbing me; two had reached age 16 and dropped out; one was promoted midyear to Grade 8, and four were transferred to a program for at-risk youth. The Iowa Test of Basic Skills indicated that these students' reading levels ranged from second to sixth grade. Every day I was challenged to keep these students "quiet" for 45 minutes—silent reading, dittoed worksheets, and word puzzles. I attempted these assignments while the room was being bombarded with paper basketballs by kids who wanted to be like "Mike" (Jordan). Conversation about the latest street business was their predominant focus. However, there were moments of success. These average kids loved journal writing. Often, the biggest, toughest student in the class revealed stories about helping older people in her neighborhood. The class enjoyed being read

to, playing word games such as Scrabble, and viewing *Ghostwriter*, a public television writing motivation series. The teaching of this class was a career-changing event that led me to an affiliate of the federally-funded National Writing Project—the Coastal Georgia Writing Project (CGWP). The CGWP is one of 160 sites devoted to teachers-teaching-teachers the art of writing (Fox, 1995). At NWP sites, affiliates such as the CGWP sponsor a five-week summer institute with intense training, research, and personal writing. When the principles of the writing project are blended with key motivation theories, success results! This paper is an integration of theories and practices that I have discovered on my mission to address the needs of "at-risk" learners from across cultures and socioeconomic conditions. My experience as a writing teacher has shown that these theories and strategies hold true for inner city youths in Savannah, Georgia, as well as for gifted and talented students in the pristine Beaufort-Hilton Head Island area of South, Carolina.

Theoretical Bases

Several theories blend well together for the benefit of students who are unmotivated and turned off to learning reading and writing. First, language is a social creature—one cannot experience the joys of language in a quiet classroom. Kenneth Bruffee saw the link between cooperative learning and writing. Bruffee (1984) contends that conversation facilitates learning and that the teacher's role in the classroom is to encourage language interaction. "The way they talk with each other determines the way they think and the way they will write," holds Bruffee (1984). We as educators have been misled and brainwashed to believe that "conversation detracts from learning." Not so! Socialization even improves the learning of some students, like African-Americans, although we must be careful not to generalize.

Guild (1994) reports that there is a connection between culture and learning styles. There are many controversial aspects to this issue, but researchers agree that certain groups learn best under certain conditions. Researchers like Evelyn Baker Dandy (1991) contend that the oral gifts of African-American students can produce learning. "Students have an opportunity to interact with their peers, to express their ideas, transcribe them into print, compare them to those offered by their peers and select appropriate courses of action," writes Dandy (p. 120). Further, she adds, "With cooperative learning, orality can feed into literacy in creative and constructive ways" (p. 120).

The learning styles of the at-risk student have been described by Helene Hodges and cited by McGurdy (1989). Hodges found the five learning style characteristics of the at-risk student to be: (a) tactile/kinesthetic preference, (b) global learning, or understanding of broad concepts, (c) a preference for team activities, (d) nontraditional seating arrangements, and (e) clear expectations, additional structure, and immediate feedback.

When the learning styles of the at-risk student are related to Martin Covington's theory of self-worth, the previously explained failings of our educational system are made clear. According to Covington (1984) the chief components of his theory are

threefold: (a) self-esteem depends on performance; (b) perceived ability determines feelings of worthiness; and (c) effort is valued to determine worth. We often see self-protection mechanisms in our classrooms such as bullying of others as students try to defend their images before their peers and mask perceptions of what they see as inability. If Johnny can not read well, he has to wear the most expensive sneakers or be the toughest, or most comical to find some worth. The competitive nature in schools makes some students feel low self-esteem from the very start. We pit student against student and class against class by ranking, sorting, and classifying. Atwell (1987) notes that a common problem in secondary education is that "low track students report the lowest levels of peer esteem and the highest levels of discord in the classroom" (p. 39). It was no accident that my 1992 class described earlier had its special configuration. They felt defeated and unwanted before they came through the door. On many days, I heard the complaint, "You like 7-1 (top academic class) better than you like us." Unfortunately, these streetwise kids could look on the chalkboard and sense that their instruction was less challenging than other classes. Based on Covington's theory of self-worth, students should be allowed to set individual goals and experience personal measures of success.

Student motivation is controlled by the human desires for survival, love, power, fun, and freedom, explains Glasser in an interview with Brandt (1988). Briefly, Glasser's (1990) control theory of motivation supports the use of learning teams as a means to satisfy the need for power and belonging. Glasser contends that the use of cooperative learning teams will also reduce disciplinary problems (Brandt, 1988). Another element of the control theory is that students, like all humans, make choices to satisfy their needs. If the teacher can provide the right prompts, he or she can make reading and writing need-satisfying experiences for students.

Classroom Practice

Rather than taking in these theories individually, I have blended them as a basis for classroom activities that work! Cooperative learning, differentiated learning styles, self-worth theory, and the control theory of motivation have been incorporated in the following learning activities. In the classroom, teachers should feel free to use a little razzle-dazzle, or whatever it takes to stimulate reading and writing activities— from holiday lights to the elements of a rap. Briefly, a few of the most successful activities are described here:

- *A Fabulous Fashion Show*
  Students perform a fashion show with stage lights and a jazzy musical background to demonstrate their use and understanding of adjectives and descriptive writing.
- *Choral Reading and Rapping*
  The teacher or student selects an appropriate poem, ballad, or choral reading for adaptation. Students create their own rap version of a piece like "The Ballad of John Henry," complete with sound effects, after reading it the traditional way.

- *Photo Poetry*
  Students write original poems about personal photographs after holding mini-conversations and constructing a word map. This activity from Kiaune (1992) shows how cooperative learning can motivate slow readers to write poetry.
- *Reading Parties*
  Rather than dictating to students a set number of books to read within a time period, allow students to set their own personal goals. This takes away the fear of failing and removes the air of competition. During the past school term, my students set individual goals and maintained their own reading records using graphic organizers to chart progress. If a student met his goal to read one book, he was entitled to all the rewards of the student who met his goal of five books! Reading became a daily fun experience. We held parties periodically, at which students who reached their goals met at special times to read, eat snacks, and share books. Students who fell short of their goals were not penalized and eventually did succeed. Accelerated Reader, a computer-managed reading program which we used for a team-wide reading rally, is suitable for individual goal-setting and personal self-worth.

Since 1992, I have changed the atmosphere in Room B-3 at Scott Middle School by setting up a mini-computer lab with five stations, providing a classroom library, and buying hands-on materials such as word games, software, and cut and paste supplies for making flip books and story mobiles. Seats are often arranged in a large group circle or small-group arrangements.

Rather than easy, watered-down lessons, I provide all students the same opportunities. By using the tools of total quality management, which I introduced the students to in 1996, we have heightened the level of expectations. Students themselves learned how to identify good quality, and when given quality factors prior to beginning a task, they produced good work. I have found that at-risk students benefit most from the use of total quality management tools such as rubrics and run charts because it provides them with an additional support structure. On a rubric, I would show the task broken down step by step along with the point value for each. The run charts, used to graph personal grades, helped them to focus on individual goals and progress.

Conclusion

As a teacher using these writing strategies based on theories of cooperative learning, learning styles, self-esteem, and motivation, I facilitate and nurture, rather than boss and dictate. Not every situation is perfect; however, and some groups may require more structure than others. Prior to the cutting of Title One services at my school, I also found that the strategies worked better with smaller groups. Large class size is a negative factor. With trial and error, one learns how to balance the work-to-fun ratio to experience "serious fun" (Rea, 1995). In spite of the challenges and shortcomings, I see the student-teacher relationship as a youth-adult partnership second only to the

child-parent relationship. The popular song, "I Believe I Can Fly," sung by R. Kelly in the *Space Jam* movie, should be a rallying cry for all partners of youth today. If we are to be true partners, if we expect our students to fly, we must first believe in them. Believe even when the situation seems hopeless. Help pull them through that open door of opportunity if necessary, but make it a fun-filled experience that meets their basic human needs for belonging and self-worth.

As partners of our children, we owe it to them to provide the tools of literacy in order that they may enjoy socioeconomic and cultural freedom. If language is power, then let us give our youth all they deserve. ■

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Chapter 9

Motivating Reluctant Middle-Level Writers

Valerie Cole and Dale Purvis

> Putting words on a blank page is like looking in the mirror. You face yourself and you may not like what you see, especially if you are not used to writing regularly. You fear that you will not live up to your aspirations. You hear the words of others: 'Did you write that awful stuff?' (Graves, 1995, p. 34)

As Donald Graves reveals, *all* writers face the blank page, painfully aware of the risks that it presents. There is the risk that what we write will be deemed inadequate—flawed, inconclusive, filled with error of all possible kinds—in short, a dreadful failure. There is the further risk that we, ourselves, will be thought failures for having written it.

For middle school students—developing physically, socially, and intellectually, unsure of themselves and of the world about them—the risk is even greater. Confronting the blank page, they think of the derision of their peers and the red pen of their teacher. In order to avoid these unspeakable things, they avoid writing.

Writing, however, will meet their needs in many ways. Through writing we explore and record the world about us; through writing we come to understand that world, and our place within it. Speaking of her own first experiences as an essayist, Anna Quindlen (1988) explains:

> Never did I make so much sense of my life as I did then, for it was inevitable that as a writer I would find out most clearly what I thought, and what I only thought I thought, when I saw it written down. (p. xix)

Middle grade students need to write, like Quindlen, to find out what they think, to make sense of their lives. They need to write as they are inquiring, examining, discussing, and learning. Some, however, find themselves unable to begin when writing means a blank, threatening page.

As Carignan-Belleville (1989) explains, "the motivation to write, especially for the slow learner, comes from successful first experiences" (p. 57). For these students the best beginning is in a classroom that supports, encourages, and engages reluctant writers while providing them with the opportunity to develop effective writing skills.

Atwell (1991) points out that "remediation in language arts most often addressed

skills in isolation—handwriting, spelling, verb forms, sequencing, sentence structure, paragraph organization, and so on. Students complete endless exercises in their identified areas of weakness, mountains of worksheets and workbook pages..." (p. 20). Working with reluctant writers and learning disabled students in her own writing workshops, Atwell discovered, however, that "exercises do little to inspire commitment or excellence and nothing to suggest the power and satisfaction of full-blown literacy" (p. 20). If students are to find satisfaction in the process of writing and take pride in what they have written, they must write. The best beginning for reluctant writers is writing. Teachers can help reluctant writers to begin the process of writing with three practical recommendations: *(a) Give students opportunities to write each day; (b) provide them with a wide variety of "low risk" writing activities, and (c) use the writing portfolio to encourage developing writers to assume the greater risk of writing for another person.* In the remaining sections these three recommendations will be explained and illustrated.

Reluctant Middle-Level Writers Should Write Each Day

As Graves (1995) reminds us, "there is simply no substitute for writing every day to establish classroom structure. Through daily writing, children develop their rhythms, their rituals of getting work done, and their rituals of consultation" (p. 35). When writing becomes part of the classroom routine, writing apprehension is lessened.

The journal is one way for reluctant writers to begin. Students can write in their journals each day. They can record their thoughts and learn to believe in them, and in themselves. In particular, journals develop fluency of expression and confidence in the emerging voice. Any teacher who has used journals, however, is aware of the problems that they can create. First of all, students tend to write too little or too much, to become inappropriately introspective, and to ramble into incoherence. To provide more meaningful writing experiences, Carignan-Belleville (1989) suggests offering open-ended sentence starters for journal entries. Similarly, students can record their responses to stories and poems that they are reading or to current events.

As they develop a voice through daily writing in their journals, as they develop confidence in that voice, students need response. In this respect, journals present a second problem for the teacher, who must read and comment upon the daily entries, a time-consuming process and one that does not offer the student an immediate response to his or her writing. Gillespie (1993) suggests another approach to journal writing. Buddy book journals, recording a dialogue between two students as they are reading a book of their own choosing, provide the writer with continual and immediate response. Gillespie discovered that this constant writing and responding increased the students' range of writing:

> students responded in a variety of cognitive and affective ways. Immediately, some extended the story's conclusion, continuing the narration.... Many analyzed characters' motivations, often comparing the characters to people they knew. Another popular topic was the value of friendship. (p. 64)

For reluctant middle-level writers, the buddy journal works effectively because the constant response encourages them to write again and helps them to gain the confidence to write for a first reader . . . their peer.

Reluctant Middle-Level Writers Should be Given a Wide Variety of 'Low-Risk' Writing Activities

Reluctant middle-level learners have much to say, much to contribute to peers in their classrooms. They arrive at school with diverse backgrounds, widely varied interests, and differing learning styles. Reluctant middle-level writers should be introduced to the purposes and forms of writing through ungraded writing activities that encourage creativity and self-expression while providing them the opportunity to explore their own diversity.

Alexander and Larkin (1994) find that "poetry writing is uniquely well suited for working with all adolescents because it allows them to express their feelings in a safe and private way" (p. 38). When reluctant middle-level writers are introduced to poetry in a fun, whimsical, and "you-can-do-this" approach, they become engaged with the possibilities of language and of form. They learn to choose the words that best express their ideas, to arrange their ideas into a coherent structure. Name poems, word poems, haiku, tankas, and cinquain are just a few of the possibilities that can be used to introduce middle-level learners to the world of poetry.

Middle-level learners are also inquisitive, posing many questions that demand answers. These questions require them to become researchers of information. In these situations teachers become co-learners with their students in an environment of inquiry. Short ungraded assignments linked to inquiry reduce writing apprehension, engage interest, generate questions, and promote cooperative learning.

One method to link a short ungraded writing assignment to inquiry is to introduce reluctant middle-level writers to the use of concept maps or the process of developing a web. Concept maps, or webs, are a way to introduce the method of brainstorming, utilizing word associations, and organizing thoughts into clusters. Concept maps are a method to discover what middle-level students know, to uncover what they need to know, and to highlight what they desire to learn. Concept maps generate topics that students can learn about and write about.

Diana Mitchell (1994) believes that student involvement creates the most meaningful learning experience:

> learning comes from active, thoughtful involvement on the part of students; that students need to discover meaning for themselves; that teaching is not a top-down proposition with the teacher being the teller. Students will learn if they are committed to their own learning, and often that commitment comes through projects and strategies that tap into students' creativity and that utilizes their thinking. (p. 78)

Just as students learn best when they are committed to their learning, they will also write best when they are committed to their learning.

While the use of varied ungraded writing assignments serves to engage reluctant middle-level writers in the process of writing, writing teachers need to encourage students to take the risks that all writers take—the risk of evaluation. Writing portfolios can help students gain confidence in their ability to speak to others.

Reluctant Middle-Level Writers Should Keep a Writing Portfolio

As reluctant writers develop their writing skills and assume the role of authors, it is critical to their intellectual development, as implied by Dewey (1938), to become reflective self-evaluators of their writing.

> Keeping track is a matter of reflective review and summarizing, in which there is both discrimination and record of the significant features of a developing experience...It is the heart of intellectual organization and of the disciplined mind.

Students in general have grown accustomed to the response of the teacher's red pen in regards to distinguishing what is good and bad about their writing. The students' measure of success or failure is determined by just how much red ink appears on their papers. Thus the students tend to focus primarily on what needs to be corrected on their piece of writing and not what is considered good writing. To lessen the risk factor and enhance the concept of a safe environment that is conducive to writing, reluctant writers in the middle grades need to be responded to in a non-threatening manner. Conferencing between student and peers and student and the teacher should take place so that the reluctant writer can develop a voice in his or her writing. These reluctant middle-level writers need to focus on what is correct and good about their writing so that they will respond more readily to the editing suggestions and revise what needs to be corrected. As reluctant writers gain confidence about their writing, the teacher should motivate the middle school students to view their work with a critical eye. The ultimate goal of all writing instruction is to promote mature, independent writing (Mather & Lachowicz, 1992).

Middle school teachers should foster the use of portfolio assessment in their writing classrooms. As middle-level reluctant writers develop into confident authors and take the necessary risks, a portfolio containing their individual writing should become the tool to measure their progress or means of assessment. Middle-level reluctant writers need to learn how to assess their progress, evaluate their writing, and determine their individual writing style. Frazier and Paulson (1992) believe that portfolios encourage self-evaluation. Middle-level reluctant writers should keep a writing portfolio containing all their drafts, unfinished, and finished pieces of writing. Portfolio assessment offers reluctant writers the opportunity to take responsibility for their learning and have a voice in the evaluation of their writing.

Conclusion

When responsibility for learning is nurtured, the middle level learner develops a sense of pride and ownership for his or her written work. Teachers can foster growth in writing by giving writers some time each day to write and by providing them with a wide variety of writing experiences. With time and practice, reluctant writers will develop both competence and confidence. The writing portfolio documents their development and their success. They are writers who have accepted the risk of speaking to another; writers who reflect and evaluate and write again. They have found their voices; they are on the page—published authors. ■

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Chapter 10

Interactive Video Disc: Reaching Students from At-Risk Environments

Carol A. Goings and Douglas A. Goings

Teachers have known for decades that proactive instruction on their part required them to supplement the students' textbooks and other printed materials with instructional tools that both motivated and sustained the attention of students who live in a world filled with technology. The use of films and videos to enhance learning is one technique on which those proactive teachers rely.

Attaining and maintaining students' interests and discipline today is a challenge that faces teachers and their administrators. Beyond keeping the attention of students, teachers are urged by their administrators and the public to raise test scores.

Learning must be encouraged, and teachers must encourage students to become active learners within their school and community environments. Not only must average students and above average students participate actively in the learning process, but educators, both teachers and their administrators, must reach out to all students to motivate them to interact in the classroom environment. This is especially true of those students who have been cursed to wear the "at-risk" earmark. Classrooms today, therefore, must become environments that stimulate students and teaches to spend their time actively pursuing learning through a variety of learning styles that are more likely to result in active learning than have traditional approaches. This will aid in creating motivation, maintaining discipline, and raising test scores.

Purpose

Sharing the benefits of interactive video laser discs is the purpose of this paper. The technology enables teachers to provide activities that reinforce concepts through a multi-sensory approach that integrates audio, visual, kinesthetic, and tactical learning. We begin by highlighting information used to characterize behavior of students from at-risk environments. After a brief presentation on at-risk behaviors, we establish a link with learning styles —the seven intelligences —before moving on to a discussion that illustrates how interactive video discs are used to supplement traditional teaching methodologies.

Characteristics of At-risk Students

Who are the students who are at-risk educationally? Traditionally, a student classified as an "at-risk student," was one whose appearance, language, culture, values, community, and family structure were different from the ideal student (Hixson & Tinzmann, 1990). The "at-risk" nature of the problem was considered to be a problem of deficiencies among the students rather than deficiencies within the educational and social environments (Goodlad & Keating, as cited in Hixson & Tinzmann, 1990). Today, in our fast-paced society, students face complexity within their families, their communities, and their schools, which make all students susceptible to factors that characterize at-risk environments.

Many factors affect student success in school. One group of factors that impact student success is labeled behavioral risk factors. Behavioral risk factors are behaviors that, if not understood by a student, reduce the probability of success in school (Finn, as cited in Rural Students At Risk, 1996). Participation, passive disengagement, active disengagement, and low achievement may be included as behavioral at-risk factors. Realization of behavioral factors can lead to reduced risk and success in school for all students who encounter at-risk factors (Rural Students At Risk).

According to Finn (as cited in Rural Students At Risk, 1996), participation is an observable form of behavior that includes attention to and involvement in school assignments. Students must be present, attentive, prepared, and responsive. After students have achieved this basic level of participation, they become more than passive members of the class, they actively participate, they ask questions, and interact with the teacher and other students.

When students begin to actively participate in class, the next step is to seek help in improving academic performance. When this level of participation has been accomplished, students should be encouraged to participate in school activities. As students become more involved in classroom and school activities, they reduce the risk of dropping out.

Students who exhibit characteristics of passive disengagement may be inattentive. Paying attention is imperative to successful participation in school. At-risk students may be inattentive, have short attention spans, or become easily distracted. Absenteeism, another characteristic of passive disengagement, has been identified as a strong indicator of dropping out of school. Approximately 45 percent of the students who drop out have identifiable behavioral problems (Texas Education Agency, as cited in Rural Students At Risk, 1996).

Some students quietly separate themselves from classroom activities while others separate themselves through a variety of misbehaviors. These misbehaviors, which are associated with at-risk students, include classroom discipline problems, as well as, delinquency and criminal behavior. Students exhibiting these characteristics may be described as actively disengaged.

Low achievement has frequently characterized at-risk students. Experts usually define low achievement in terms of poor class performance resulting in low grades.

Students have been found to be at higher risk for failure when grades and test scores drop during transitional years, i.e., the years when students move from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school. Roderick's study of high school dropouts in Massachusetts (as cited in Rural Students at Risk) found that dropouts showed significant drops in grades and test scores during transitional years. It is critical that students are motivated to continue the learning process especially during transitional years. These students must be offered learning experiences that allow for success.

Seven Intelligences

Today's students are living in a diverse society. The curriculum must meet the needs of all students. The theory of multiple intelligences that divide learning into seven styles helps meet the needs of many students. Howard Gardner (as cited in Gray & Viens, 1994) identified the seven intelligences in 1983. Since then, educators have learned to branch learning into the following seven subsets: verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, body/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. In order to make learning meaningful for each student, educators must understand the differences in learning styles and use appropriate instructional techniques to address each of these unique aspects of learning.

Listening, speaking, reading, and writing involve students in verbal/linguistic learning. Classifying, analyzing, and estimating prove successful in teaching concepts that relate to students' logical/mathematical learning style. Attribute webs and the scientific method are also successful with logical/mathematical learners. Visual/spatial learners need to visualize information. They can use picture metaphors, flow charts, and Venn diagrams to communicate learning. Body/kinesthetic learners need hands-on activities to aid in the learning process. They construct, feel, bend, and apply information in order to learn.

Students and teachers can employ musical/rhythmic learning by creating curriculum songs based on familiar tunes and by developing stories and poetry from musical recordings. These strategies help musical learners. Interpersonal learners learn best in an environment that encourages peer sharing and cooperative groups. Discussing, brainstorming, and coaching help these learners. Personal connections and experience give intrapersonal learners the opportunity to evaluate, explore, interpolate and assimilate. These experiences allow students to incorporate their own experiences into the learning process.

At-risk students can benefit from a stimulating classroom environment that encourages student interaction. Interactive video laser discs can be used to create a stimulating classroom environment and promote learning among all students, despite their individual needs or learning styles. Because the user must interact with the presentation, students have a better chance of becoming consciously involved with the subject, therefore improving the probability that apparent learning will occur (Trevitt, 1995). For tactile learners, concepts are reinforced through hands-on activities.

Understanding is reinforced for auditory learners through interactive video narrations, while visual learners delight in video images and movies (Davis, Hann, Lawrence, Knight, Weintraub, & Wussow 1994).

Interactive Video Laser Disc as a Teaching Tool

Interactive video discs can be a technique used to provoke student interest. Interactive video that allows users to control what they see on the monitor can be a successful teaching tool for all students, especially those students from at-risk environments. Using a combination of video, pictures, animation, graphics, audio, and text, interactive video discs enable students to examine complex concepts and information easily.

When using interactive video laser discs, in addition to on-off control of what appears on the monitor, the teacher can control several other elements. Play allows the user to play a movie clip. Still/step freezes a frame or allows the user to move one frame forward or in reverse. Pause blanks the screen. Audio is used for narrated movies. Many video laser discs allow for audio to be heard in English and Spanish. The user also has control over the speed that the frames will be viewed. Movies may be shown in slow or fast motion to allow students to process the information in different ways (Davis et al, 1994).

Equipment

A minimum of equipment is needed to set up video laser disc technology in the classroom. The user must have access to a video or television monitor and a video laser disc player with some method of control. Three methods of control are available. One method of control is the keypad that is similar to a remote control device. It allows the user to enter the functions necessary to control the video laser disc. Another method of control is the bar-code reader. By using a bar-code reader, teachers can use information accessed through bar codes written into the teaching materials that come with the video laser disc. A third means of control is the computer control that transfers the commands necessary for control of the video laser disc (Zollman & Fuller, 1996).

Use as a Teaching Methodology

As the teacher explains concepts, students observe video disc images. Incorporating visuals into the lesson eases listening comprehension. Students learn to express ideas and questions by discussing what they have seen.

Many school systems throughout the United States lack funds to purchase materials necessary for hands-on activities in the classroom. Interactive video allows students to collect data and simulate experiments not readily possible to perform in the classroom. This type of activity develops students' process skills and nurtures their understanding of concepts. Students are encouraged to think critically by relating various concepts.

A lesson taught using video laser discs can develop concepts before students read those concepts on the written page. Many learning styles can be addressed by integrating

video laser disc lessons with hands-on activities and printed instructional materials (Davis et al., 1994).

Video laser discs help teach concepts by linking classroom experiences to the outside world. Teachers can simulate an earthquake tremor or students can read about the effects of an earthquake. A lesson using a video laser disc allows students to see buildings shake and people experiencing a real earthquake. The teacher can stop the presentation for a few minutes while students discuss what they have seen and predict outcomes. When the video is restarted, the accuracy of their predictions can be evaluated. The video clip can be replayed so students can look for details they may have missed in the first viewing, further enhancing multiple learning styles.

Discipline problems are minimized when the textbook is brought to life using interactive teaching techniques. Students become active learners through participation in activities and discussions.

Teaching with interactive video allows for a variety of assessment methods to be used as an alternative to traditional test formats. Students may be evaluated on what they recognize visually from lessons as well as projects completed and other assessment alternatives. When students are assessed on learning experiences where they have been actively involved, they are more likely to achieve. When students experience achievement, self-esteem is promoted and students are motivated to take responsibility for their learning. A natural outcome of this assumption of responsibility for learning would be evidenced in higher scores on evaluations and standardized tests.

Summary

Classrooms must become environments that stimulate students and teaches to spend their time actively pursuing learning through a variety of learning styles that are more likely to result in active learning. The use of interactive video laser disc technology enables teachers to provide activities that reinforce concepts through a multi-sensory approach that integrates linguistic, mathematical, spatial, kinesthetic, rhythmic, and personal learning styles.

At-risk behaviors that affect students' ability to interact with their learning environment (participation, passive disengagement, active disengagement, and low achievement) can be reduced through technology that attracts and maintains their motivation and achievement. Students benefit from a stimulating classroom environment that encourages interaction, and the use of interactive video laser discs can create a stimulating classroom environment that promotes learning among all students, despite their individual learning styles.■

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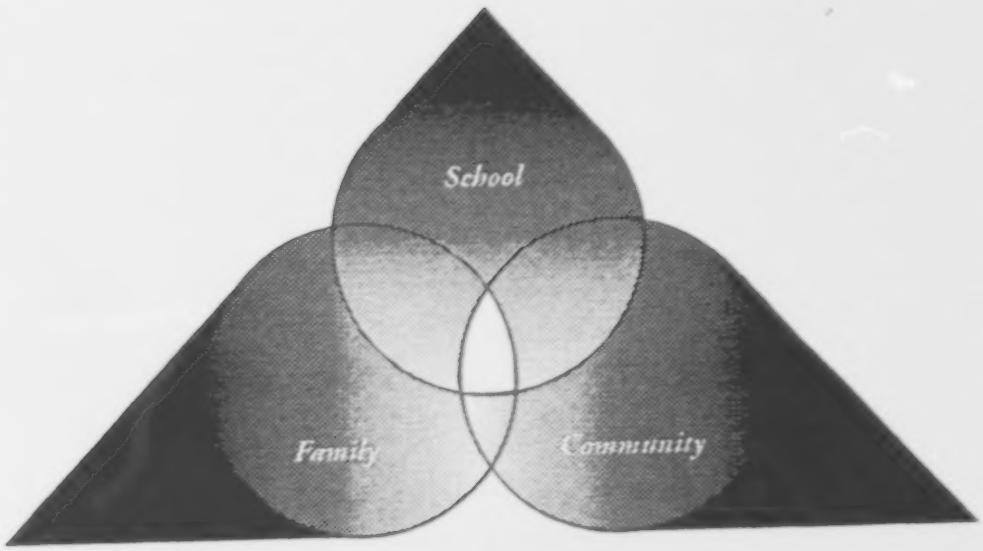
IV. Partnerships for Secondary & Post Secondary Students



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Chapter 11

The One-Room Schoolhouse Revisited: An Alternative High School Program in Rural Illinois

Joyce Dill and Diane Kruse

During the past six years, we have developed and implemented an on-site, cost-effective alternative education program that serves students who were chronically truant or who had dropped out of high school altogether. Our miniature, "one-room" high school serves students between the ages of 15 and 21, covering all core academic requirements and offering elective coursework. Students who graduate from the program complete a highly individualized course of study, while also gaining work experience and establishing post-high school life plans.

Our common goal as educators is to help our young people become successful; our first step is to help them graduate from high school knowing that they have much to offer to their communities.

History of Program

In September, 1990, a team of 22 high school teachers in Rantoul, Illinois formed to study the problem of increasing truancy and drop-outs in their local high school. The committee located students who had dropped out to learn what factors contributed to their decision to leave school, and asked what changes would make a school program accessible and meaningful to them. Faculty contacted alternative programs throughout the state to learn what worked with their students and what they would change about their programs if they could do anything they liked. Teachers also visited many of these alternative sites to see firsthand how they worked. The committee held monthly meetings to discuss what they had observed and how it might be applied to an alternative program which would meet the needs of students in their community.

The local school board committed to establish an on-site "school-within-a-school" alternative program, which granted complete autonomy to the teachers and staff creating the program. The only established guideline was that all students would complete all state and local credit requirements to earn a Rantoul High School diploma. Committee members contacted local agencies to determine how best to utilize their services; staff members visited local clubs and service organizations to educate community leaders

about the "new" school in town; and teachers identified and contacted eligible students and their parents to give them the opportunity to apply to enter the program.

The following year the Rantoul High School Alternative Education Program opened its doors. What began as a program of 15 students and 4 teachers grew to include 70 students, 4 full-time teachers, 1 teacher's aide, and 1 secretary. Curriculum was developed which met the needs of the students and satisfied the requirements of the local district. The teacher to student ratio reflected the ratio of the district to keep the program cost-effective, the average daily attendance increased, and the drop-out rate significantly decreased. In its first five years, the RTHS Alternative Education Program graduated over 80 students.

This year we used the model we developed in Rantoul to start a new alternative education program in Clinton, Illinois. Clinton Alternative High School is located in the central Illinois community of Clinton, a small town with a population of 8,000. The local high school has 675 students served by 56 teachers. Of this population, 36 students are served in the Clinton Alternative High School by 3 teachers and a secretary/aide. This is the first alternative high school program in this community.

Program Students

While every student's reasons for leaving school will differ, the Rantoul committee identified several typical problems facing the students who were dropping out of high school. Most students in our program must overcome one or more of the following obstacles in order to graduate:

- *History of academic difficulty:* Students find themselves in a cycle of failure, and need an opportunity to start over with new teachers in a new program.
- *Home/personal problems:* A wide range of personal difficulties can affect students' academic performance and behavior in school. Outside agencies or the school guidance counselors may recommend an alternative placement while students work through these issues.
- *Financial need to work:* Many of our students dropped out of school simply because their families needed them to work to make ends meet. Some students have full responsibility for supporting themselves and/or other family members. Attending school full time was impossible after working the third shift at a factory.
- *Social skills needs:* These kids have simply not learned to understand and use "normal" social behaviors. They need actual instruction in and continuous modeling of appropriate ways to ask for what they need, to deal with anger, to handle mistakes, and to think of more than one option when things do not go as planned.
- *Mental illness:* An increasing number of our students are dealing with medication and hospitalization for depression. As they return to school, they

usually need a more supportive and personal environment, and a school staff member who can act as a liaison between the home, the counselors and psychiatrists, and the school.

- *Medical difficulties:* A few students have entered our program after recovering from long hospital stays, or while dealing with chronic illnesses that prevent a full day's school attendance.
- *Pregnancy/teen parenthood:* Teenagers who are also parents often lack a strong support system. They need a part-time school attendance option, help obtaining child care, and classes teaching parenting skills.

Program Structure

The key aspect of our program is that it is a *school of choice.* Students may apply for admission independently, or they apply upon the recommendation of a teacher, counselor, or parent. No student attends the program against his or her will. Acceptance into the program is based upon the student's age, the number of credits required to graduate, life circumstances at the time, and the desire to complete high school. Priority is given to students who demonstrate the greatest interest and need through their applications and interviews with the staff.

When students enter the program, they are assigned to a Learning Coordinator (LC) who acts as a case manager, mentor, academic counselor, and advocate for 15-18 students. Together with their LCs, students create individual learning plans which describe their personal and academic goals for the quarter. No two people will have the same plan. Students are held to the commitments they make for attendance and academic progress. If they choose not to attend or complete coursework, they may be placed on probation in the program. If students do not meet the terms of their probations—the parameters of which they also determine with their LCs—they may choose to leave the program.

Since every student is on an individualized class and job placement schedule, attendance figures are based on contracted hours per day and total attendance hours per week. Students sign in and out at an attendance log kept near the entrance to the school. They are expected to spend all school attendance time on task. Discipline problems are minimal, because any students exhibiting inappropriate behavior have the option to either change their behavior or sign out for the day and "buy back" missed attendance hours before the end of the week. Most students choose to stay and complete their work.

Every Friday, all students attend individual appointments with their LCs to check their academic progress and attendance for the week, and to address any personal problems or behavior concerns individually. Students and their LCs write probation agreements, make plans and set deadlines for the following week's work, add or drop classes, set up conferences with teachers, and arrange to buy back attendance hours at these meetings.

Program Curriculum

In order to accommodate the different learning styles and needs of our students, our curriculum is structured into four typical "classroom" experiences. Each semester credit is based on the Carnegie Unit, requiring 60 hours of classwork. Students may enroll in three or four classes each quarter. Most classes, with the exception of job and community service placements, are designed to be completed in a nine-week session. All core academic requirements for graduation are offered on-site for all grade levels.

Courses/Seminars can meet daily or weekly, depending on the nature of the material to be covered and the activities planned. Classes tend to be about 35-40 minutes long, with outside assignments to be completed during open study time. Enrollment averages around 8 students per class—partially to ensure that every student can receive individual help, and partially because this tends to be the maximum number of students who are all at a similar stage in their academic plans.

Independently paced courses are comparable to correspondence classes. Students work at their own pace, setting deadlines for themselves in consultation with a teacher. The entire curriculum is outlined, so the student knows up front exactly how much work will be expected for the credit. Teacher help is available whenever the student needs it. These courses work best for students who do not yet relate effectively in a group setting, students with unpredictable work schedules, students who are motivated to earn an additional credit, or students who are somewhat homebound. Independent courses also allow us to take students in as emergency placements mid-quarter, rather than waiting until the beginning of the next term.

Work experience and community internships make our students visible in the community and teach them valuable life skills. Over half of our students are employed and receive high school credit for completing a semester of part or full-time work successfully. As part of their schooling, students develop on-the-job interpersonal communication skills and receive individual job counseling from our job coordinator. Students may also earn credit for completing an approved 60-hour community service internship.

Co-enrollment at other institutions enables our small staff to expand the range of classes available through the program. We encourage our students to take specialized courses that we cannot offer by enrolling at the traditional high school for one hour a day, taking a course at the community college, or beginning trade school. Students take courses like art, driver's education, foreign language, shop, chorus, etc. through this option. Several students have earned their beautician's licenses, and one will begin welding coursework this fall.

Conclusion

No program is a "magic formula" for "fixing" our schools or our students. Indeed, we are reluctant to describe our program as a model, since it is constantly shifting and changing as we re-evaluate our students' needs, and learn about new approaches educators in other programs are using.

So what works? First, assess the particular problems that students in your district face—ask them why they are dropping out of school *before* establishing a program. Staff your program with teachers who have "instant credibility," people who have earned respect from the community and from their colleagues, who are flexible and who have expressed the desire to teach in an alternative school. Give teachers the flexibility and responsibility to figure out what works by visiting other programs, attending conferences and seminars, and then experimenting in their home schools. Accept mistakes—staff and students must be free to experiment and to learn from successes *and* failures, and realize that no program will ever meet the needs of every student.

Our "one-room schoolhouse" addresses the educational and personal needs of many students at risk of dropping out, and creates a positive and flexible environment where it is understood and expected that all students can learn. ■

Chapter 12

Successful CAI Programs for At-Risk Students

Susan Trimble and Eva Barna

Although computer-assisted instructional (CAI) programs are helping at-risk students learn, the general picture of classroom instruction has not changed over the past century. Traditional models of classroom instruction persist despite an array of state and federal reform initiatives (Cuban, 1990; Rowan, 1990) and copious amounts of educational research findings (Hallinan, 1996). Noting the success of two CAI programs at School for Individualized Learning (SAIL), an alternative school in Tallahassee, Florida, where classroom instruction reflects "new" practices, we sought to identify the features that may account for their success. Three research questions guided the study: (a) What are the features of these two programs that are research-based? (b) What are the contextual features associated with these classroom features? (c) How do the two programs fit into the broader picture of current education reform initiatives?

To answer these questions, we looked first at the literature related to computer-assisted instruction, at-risk teaching strategies, and reform initiatives. Over a six month period we then compared identified classroom and contextual features of the two programs with findings in the literature. The second author, a computer lab administrator, reacted to the research articles from a practitioner's standpoint, and the first author, a university researcher, observed lab classes, attended faculty meetings, interviewed the principal, and viewed course outlines, student materials, and school progress reports. The findings were then framed within the wider lens of national educational reform, described by Rowan (1990) as "control-based" and "committed-based."

Two CAI Programs

The AIMS (Applied Individual Management System)

The purpose of the AIMS is to provide students with a non-traditional way to earn credits for graduation. The software is Josten's Applied Individualized Management System, which provides a scope and sequence format for each 14 semester course offerings in traditional high school subjects, such as four levels of math, four kinds of science, four levels of English, three levels of social studies, etc. Students who have failed a course in the traditional classroom can still earn credit for the class by completing the AIMS course. The computer format enables the students to have immediate feedback

on answers, to work at their own pace, and to redo work. Since everyone in the AIMS classes has failed the course in the traditional classroom setting one or more times, there is a sense of belonging, camaraderie, and helpfulness among students. Able to control how much work they do, 75% of the students want to finish early, and 50% actually do so.

The Desktop Publishing Academy

The Desktop Publishing course provides opportunities for students to learn marketable skills in graphics and layout, and, when taken in conjunction with one year of journalism, to graduate with workplace skills and $2,000 in scholarships each year for college or post-secondary training for a total of four years. Using PageMaker, the course was developed by one of the authors and uses workplace scenarios for student projects. Students develop and complete a final graphic projects in a series of skill mastery steps. The computer format enables the students to experiment with graphic and layout techniques, change designs, and redo work incorporating devices as the digital camera, scan sheet.

Classroom Features and the Research Base

Four research-based classroom features emerged from our investigation of the two CAI programs. These features were the use of motivational factors, expert teacher practices, a hierarchical development of learning outcomes, and effective learning skills interventions.

Motivational Factors

Students reported high motivation to take and finish the two CAI for a variety of reasons. Based on the authors' observations and 95 student responses to an informal student questionnaire, the most frequently indicated motivational factor was the opportunity to earn scholarships in the DeskTop Publishing course. Another indication of this motivation was the 96 percent completion and passing rate of the AIMS classes.

Expert Teaching Practices

The DeskTop Publishing course emphasizes students' production of a real-life product, such as brochures, newsletters, invitations, and announcements. Step-by-step tasks and clear performance criteria help students progress from one skill mastery to a final product synthesizing all skills. The students can choose the type and topic for the demonstrations and final product, based on their individual interests.

This emphasis on task, choice, and engagement of these two CAI programs is supported throughout the research base of effective teaching and learning. One example is the work of Darling-Hammond (1996) and her colleagues at the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching at Columbia University. In several studies of expert teachers who succeed with an array of students, including those students considered at-risk, these researchers found some common features of expert teachers:

developing engaging tasks, allowing students choices and different entry points into the work, building on their strengths and interests, scaffolding learning experiences, developing student confidence, motivation and effort, and making students feel connected and capable in school (p. 11-12).

Hierarchy of Skill Development

The DeskTop Publishing course is organized for students to acquire one graphic or layout skill at a time and from there to practice and apply each successive skill in real-life projects meeting clearly defined criteria. Such monitoring and continuous progress on a hierarchy of skills was investigated by Biggs & Collins (1982), who named the skills hierarchy, The SOLO Taxonomy: A Hierarchical Model of Learning Outcomes, with SOLO being the an acronym for "Structure for Observed Learning Outcomes." Such a feature as the structured involvement plus high expectations are two reoccurring themes in the ERIC Clearinghouse on Education Management document, entitled "Meeting the Needs of At-Risk Students" (Bowers, 1990).

Learning Skills Interventions

The two CAI programs incorporated eight of the nine interventions (those with effect sizes greater than .5) that emerged from a meta-analysis of learning skills interventions (Hattie, Biggs, and Purdie, 1996). These interventions were tutoring, mastery learning, goals, class environment, disposition to learn, remediation and feedback, direct instruction, quantity of instruction. The CAI programs did not incorporate home environment (.67). Based on 51 studies of learning and study skills with some type of learning and an outcome of performance, skills or affect, the authors concluded that training "should be in context, use tasks within the same domain as the target domain, and promote a high degree of learner activity and metacognition awareness" (p. 131). Each of these recommendations is part of the CAI programs.

The Setting

The setting for the two CAI programs is SAIL, a 230-student, public alternative high school in Tallahassee, Florida. In operation since 1975, SAIL became fully accredited in 1981 by the Southern Association of Colleges & Schools as the first public alternative school in Florida. In 1987 SAIL received Florida's first Award of Excellence, and was hailed by Florida's Commissioner of Education as "one of the premiere alternative education schools in the country" (Wood, 1989, p. 183).

Contextual Features and the Research Base

The following section describes three contextual features of the two CAI programs and the research supporting their contribution to effective learning environments.

Integrated Program Design

Initially organized with the leadership of Principal Wood, the two CAI programs

combine aspects of Florida state legislated actions, commercial products, and district policy, forming an integrated program design that stretches beyond the traditional high school curriculum and instructional practices. Drawing upon funding of the Gold Seal Program passed by the Florida Legislature, the DeskTop Publishing Academy provides scholarships up to $8,000 for high school graduates with credits in journalism and DeskTop Publishing. In the commercial arena, both programs use commercially developed software, Josten's software for the AIMS program and PageMaker for the DeskTop Publishing course. District policies regarding use of non-teacher certified personnel designate funding for a certified "expert teacher" to design and develop the DeskTop Publishing course.

Such integration from a variety of sources provides an example of new behaviors and roles for educators who face the growing complexity of schooling.

Communal-type School Environment

Decisions related to the two CAI programs were made by a committee of faculty members including Principal Wood who decided that students eligible for the AIMS program would be only those students who had previously failed that course, that the Desktop Publishing course would be added after the first summer's course of Aims, that faculty would each be responsible for their students in the lab.

The two programs within the context of a small alternative settings also mirror research findings that show higher levels of student success are associated with performance-oriented pedagogies, and communal-type school organization (Darling-Hammond, 1996). Both programs as examples of performance-oriented pedagogy are part of other instructional offerings for at-risk students at SAIL, providing what Slavin (1996) advocated as array of offerings for at-risk students.

Building School Capacity and Teacher Professionalism

The two programs are administrated by a former paraprofessional at the school, who is now classified as a certified "expert" teacher, part of a district policy addressing the need to expose students to current practices in work settings under the direction of experts in that field. This maximum use of in-house personnel is part of what Smylie (1996) called "building human capacity." Reform efforts encourage the maximum use of in-house personnel, and the adoption of practices to encourage and sustain teacher input and innovations. The assumption here is that teachers and staff close to the students have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to support, adapt and/or instigate innovative strategies specifically addressed to their students, that the talent is within each school, and a supportive environment enables fruition.

Teachers role in educational reform and the professionalization of teaching has received growing attention since the Holmes Group (1986) report, *Tomorrow's Teachers: A Report of the Holmes Group, A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the Twenty-first Century* (Carnegie Forum, 1986) and recently, *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future* (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). The importance

of teachers' knowledge, norms, and skills is recognized as one of many factors in the link among structural changes, changes in teacher's practices, and changes in students' learning (Elmore, 1995).

These two programs exemplify elements needed by schools to implement reform practices: an integrated program design and collaborative support for teachers' innovations. Such contextual features focused our attention on the third research question, "How do these two programs fit into current education reform initiatives?"

Two Reform Initiatives: Commitment and Control

These two CAI programs provide classroom examples of parts of two reform initiatives begun in the 1980's and referred to by Rowan (1990) as"control-based" and "commitment-based." The first initiative increased bureaucratic control over teaching, sought a standardized system of input, behavior, and output through centralized authority and state-driven reforms (Cuban, 1990). The second initiative sought the professional autonomy of teachers and the working conditions in schools that enhanced commitment and expertise of teachers. This replaced the hierarchy structures with networks of structures of decision making.

The two CAI programs fit within both reform initiatives as described by Rowan (1990) as "control-based" and "commitment-based." The programs' features of using top-down policies in state and district standards (use of credits) and funding provisions (state Gold Seal funds scholarships and district funds for an expert teacher) falls within the "control-based" initiative. The use of teacher innovations, the in-house design of the AIMS and DeskTop Publishing Academy, the training of the faculty, and the participative faculty decision-making process are part of the "commitment-based" initiative.

Summary

What accounts for the success of the program? Two classes of features can be identified: (1) the research-based classroom features were the use of valued motivational factors, expert teacher practices, a hierarchical development of learning outcomes, and effective learning skills interventions, and (2) the research-based contextual features include integrated program design of commercial products, legislated funds, and district support for the use of "expert" teacher; communal-type school environment, and building human capacity and teacher professionalism. These programs, by making use of legislated funds, district policy, commercial products, and shared decision-making at the school level are part of both reform initiatives described by Rowan (1990) as described as "control-based" and "teacher professionalism and commitment-based."

Conclusion

In an era calling for increased student outcomes, these two programs provide an example of research/practice connections that target student performance. The programs also exemplify two elements purported to be essential in educational reform: (a)

collaborative efforts as evident in an integrated program design and, (b) practices and attitudes for building school capacity and increased teacher innovation. Combining aspects of both the "committed" and "control-base" reform initiatives, the two programs highlight a reality of schools today: The need for combining funds and products from a variety of sources with the in-house talents of staff and leadership to implement research-based classroom changes.■

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Chapter 13

Workforce Development: Success Through Community, Business, and School Partnership

Korynne Taylor-Dunlop, JoAnn Bailey, and Robert Moon

The Benton Harbor Workforce Skill Development Program is a collaborative effort between Benton Harbor Area Schools, City of Benton Harbor, Cornerstone Alliance, and Andrews University. The program is funded by grant from the Michigan Jobs Commission with matching contributions and in-kind services from the City of Benton Harbor and Cornerstone Alliance.

The program goal is to address local workforce issues and needs identified by area employers and to place program graduates in livable wage jobs. The program targets Berrien County with an emphasis in the Benton Harbor area which has some of the highest per capita national rates related to crime, unemployment, unwed mothers, those on welfare, and drug usage. Demographic indicators place almost all the youth in this program in the at-risk category.

The Program has two major instructional components: (a) job-specific applied skills accomplished through a self-paced, multi-media, interactive computer program; (b) a Life Skills Seminar to develop work maturity and life-coping skills needed to maintain employment. Employers have committed jobs to those who successfully complete the program. Services provided participants in addition to instruction include: Assessment, Counseling (career and personal), Mentoring, Resume Writing, Referral Service, Placement in Full-time Positions, 90-day Follow-up, and Continued Educational Opportunities.

Program Foundation

Wehlage (1983) listed five principles that must guide state and district policy for traditional comprehensive high schools to become substantially more effective in diminishing their at-risk and dropout rates. These principles are also true for agencies. These include: (a) the need to have good information about students; (b) the need to have good information about the effects of school policies and practices on at-risk students; (c) the recognition that personal and small environments are more likely to produce membership and educational engagement for at-risk students; (d) the recognition that more of the same kind of curriculum and teaching is not likely to succeed with at-

risk students; (e) the need to have a mechanism that will hold institutions accountable for success with at-risk students.

The career development materials used by the center were developed by Adkins (1974). His research revealed that most non-traditional educational centers have several curricular tracks. Adkins envisioned a curriculum that runs parallel with other programs and is life-problem centered. The Adkins Life Skills Program deals with predictable developmental tasks, crises, and problems faced by students at different stages of their lives.

The Need

The program is located in Benton Harbor, Michigan which is a Federally designated Weed & Seed area and is Michigan's only state-designated Enterprise Zone. Benton Harbor has the second highest poverty ranking in Michigan. The average per capita income in Benton Harbor is $5,622 per year. 1990 census data reveals that 58% of the city's population is below the poverty level, and nearly 40% of households received some form of public assistance, which includes aid such as Food Stamps, AFDC, Medicaid, SSI and other entitlements. The most recent figures from the Family Independence Agency (DSS), show that 2,152 households receive ADC and 4,673 receive food stamps. The Michigan Employment Security Commission's 1995 unemployment statistics reported an unemployment rate of 33%.

The 1990 census shows that 58% of families with children under 18 live beneath the poverty level, and three-quarters of single female headed households with children live in poverty. As a result, approximately 71% of Benton Harbor's children live below the poverty level, and in the Benton Harbor Area Schools, 83% of the students receive free or reduced lunch. An Associated Press release (Associated Press, Lansing, Michigan, 1997), reported current rates of unemployment (24%), families below the poverty level (58%), families living on public assistance (45%), students qualified for free and reduced price lunches (90%), and more than 400 students missing almost half of the first semester.

Benton Harbor's crime rate is three times greater than that of most regions in the country. The national crime average is 7,313 per 100,000; the city of Benton Harbor records 21,401 per 100,000. Drug trafficking is one of the most serious problems facing the area. In 1994, Benton Harbor had the unfortunate distinction as the murder capital of the nation, according to the Associated Press. The rate in 1994 was 156 murders per 100,000 people; this is about 15 times the recent national averages.

For the 1992-93 school year the graduation rate was the lowest in the state only 40%. The dropout rate was 21% for the year, the highest in the state for any school system as large or larger than Benton Harbor. Over all high school proficiency test scores are well below state averages. The Associated Press (Associated Press, Lansing, MI, 1997) reported "Only 1 percent of students scored at the proficient level in the science test, while 4% did so in math, 9% in reading and 3% in writing." The historic trend has been that the longer the students are in the Benton Harbor school system the further they fall behind state averages. The large percent who fail to graduate (about

60%) and the number who graduate with weak academic skills cannot help but contribute to high unemployment rates, high crime rates, and high poverty rates.

Program Structure

Program Support

The Benton Harbor Workforce Skill Development Program is a collaborative effort between Benton Harbor Area Schools, City of Benton Harbor, Cornerstone Alliance, and Andrews University which provides the instructional/counseling staff. The program was funded by a $461,000 grant from the Michigan Jobs Commission with matching contributions of about $200,000 from the city of Benton Harbor and Cornerstone Alliance. The Center was charged with establishing a program to address local workforce development needs. Program goal of the consortium is to support the development of a strong economic development base in the Cornerstone Alliance service area and the Benton Harbor Enterprise Zone by providing a skilled workforce for existing and new businesses.

Program Participants

The program, founded in 1995, originally targeted individuals residing in the Cornerstone Alliance service area, with special emphasis on the Benton Harbor area. While the general target area includes all of Berrien County the primary focus was on Benton Harbor. More than 90% of participants were from Benton Harbor. The typical profile of the trainees includes: (a) under employed or unemployed; (b) individuals aged 18 or over, with a history of failure in the traditional classroom setting and/or lack a high school diploma; (c) individuals not eligible for other state or federally funded programs; (d) under employed adults who want to upgrade their skills to enable them to move to higher paying positions; (e) adults and out-of-school youths who have failed to meet entry level job placement requirements; (f) recent high school graduates who are not going on to a two- or four-year college.

Program Components

The Program teaches fundamental job-related skills needed to enter and succeed in the workforce including basic technical skills, human relation skills and life coping skills required to maintain employment. Participation in the program includes 4 hours a day (2 hrs. of Job Skills and 2 hrs. of Life Skills) 5 days per week. The job-specific applied skills are learned using a self-paced, multi-media, interactive computer based program titled: *Job Skill Education Program* (JSEP). The JSEP component requires individuals to have at least a fifth-grade math and reading level. Each participant is required to complete a test of basic skills as related to the workplace before being placed into the job specific component of the program. Those individuals not meeting the math and reading requirements are referred to supporting agencies who can better meet their needs. Once individuals attain the skills necessary to meet the requirements of the program, they can be referred back to the program. The Adkins Life Skills

component of the program is competency based and designed to foster behavioral mastery and attitudinal change. The counseling goals are achieved by instructional means utilizing pre-developed learning programs and resources modified specifically for target groups. Specific training was provided for teachers and counselors in the use of the resources and related procedures. One of the key principles underlying the Adkins Life Skills approach is that it is an intervention designed to facilitate students' awareness of the major career development tasks they need to master, and to help them acquire the knowledge and behaviors needed to accomplish these tasks.

Work Ethic Development

There is a focus on helping participants develop a strong work ethic. The program is structured and simulates the work environment including adherence to attendance policies. The Center has developed a workplace simulation in conjunction with the Heath Corporation to help participants as needing additional training in a work supervised environment. The simulation provides the staff with the opportunity to observe students' behaviors. Individualized coaching and feedback are used to help the students enhance and apply skills learned in JSEP and Life Skills.

Certification for Employment and Follow-up

Upon meeting program requirements, the client receives a certificate that indicates proficiency in the skills required for entry level positions with participating employers. When the trainees are placed with employers, the Center's staff routinely provides follow-up for the first 12 weeks and sometimes for as much as one year.

Measures of Success: Economic and Work Results

The original program graduated 182 individuals of whom 132 (73%) were placed. One hundred sixteen (88%) are still working. Since the initial placements others have finished and have been placed. As of February 1997, there were 145 persons from the original and more recent groups who are working. The estimated economic impact of this 145 individuals is $7.00 of base salary and $2.00 per hour of fringe benefits totaling $9.00 per hour per individual flowing into the community. On an annualized basis this means these 145 people bring $2,714,400 into the community.

In mid 1995, when the program started, the unemployment rate was 33%. The rate is now about 23%. The 145 individuals which this program brought to an employment status theoretically accounted for about half of the 10% drop. The total cost including local support is about $625,000. This means that the annual benefit flowing back to the community is approximately 8 times as much as the original investment with the cost benefits continuing. There were one-time start-up costs that will make the return on investment greater in the future, perhaps as much as 15:1. A comparable, but improved program for 200 participants could be accomplished without the start-up costs for $350,000 to $400,000 per year.

One function of the program which was not initially anticipated was the on-going

support individuals seek by returning to the Center for assistance in problem-solving related to challenges they face at work or in their personal lives. This has in many instances resulted in their working through what they felt were issues of unfair treatment in ways that retained their position and helped them view their work situation in more positive terms.

There is a dimension of the Center where it is difficult to place a price tag. There are a number of individuals who if they did not receive the type of help provided by the Center, would likely over time become involved with the criminal justice system.

Program Success

The following points are based on a synthesis of descriptive statistical data, participant comments, staff observations, and program components which contribute to success. Fourteen factors are particularly important to the Program's success. These are:

- Employer participation in formulating the program: Employers collaborated with Cornerstone Alliance and other agencies designing the general structure for a program that would deal with both fundamental job and technical skills as well as life skills.
- Employers' commitment to provide jobs: Approximately 198 full-time jobs with fringe benefits subject to economic conditions.
- Staffing was a collaborative effort between the program director and Andrews University.
- Special staff training: All staff was cross-trained prior to the beginning of the program in both life skills and the use of JSEP (Job Skills Education Programs).
- Careful evaluation of participants including identification of each individual's reading and math level, other skills important to acquiring a job, and testing for drugs.
- Teamwork throughout the program: Staff participated in screening and problem solving; and functioned together as a team in the Life Skills seminars and helped each other through coaching in conjunction with the computer-based JSEP training.
- A curriculum that integrates skill and emotional development: Cognitive and practical skills necessary to succeed on the job were taught within a workplace context. Work and life skills were approached in ways that built an emotionally supportive culture.
- Instruction began where a person was and went step-by-step. Instructional approaches can be summarized as: Evaluate, plan, instruct, practice advancement based on achievement; Simple to complex; Concrete to generalization to application; Use practical examples to teach skills; Help each other; Practice what you teach - Be a Role Model; Use students to help students; and Integrate the cognitive with the emotional.
- Multidimensional communication is an expectation: Communication continued

throughout the program regarding what employers expected; clients were coached in becoming effective communicators.

- The development of emotional strength: Listening and hearing what participants had to say. It was communicated by word and deed that staff cared and would always be there to help so long as the program continued.
- Support among participants that was fostered, recognized, and encouraged: Clients were encouraged to support other participants who had less skill.
- On-going staff development and program modification: Feedback from employers, participants, and staff, as well as gathering statistical information.
- Special coaching helped participants acquire and hold jobs: Throughout the program there was a focus on getting ready to get a job.
- Consistency: There was a commitment to provide caring consistency. Once communicated, expectations were followed up. ■

Conclusion

The success to date is remarkable in terms of cost benefits and even more so in terms of positive human outcomes. The experience and understanding gained through this program can serve as a pilot for other workforce development partnerships. This project needs to be the beginning of a continuing process that creates the desire and opportunity for lifelong learning among the at-risk youth and adults of Benton Harbor.

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Chapter 14

The Liberty Partnerships Program: A Model for Success

Laura M. Arvin

Running on RPM's.....Responsibility, Pride, Motivation. These words are the motto behind the St. John's University College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program. For eight years, Liberty has been assisting students complete secondary school and continue on to college and seek meaningful employment. As we approach the end of this eighth year, we are pleased to report that nearly 2500 students have been involved in our program since its inception in 1989. There are many components to the College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program, and each of these can be replicated individually or combined to assist students in their educational and personal quests. According to the Liberty Partnerships Program 1997-98 *Guidelines*, distributed by the State Education Department:

> In August 1988, legislation was signed which amended the Education Law and created the Liberty Partnerships Program (LPP) in response to New York State's school dropout rate. The program was founded on the belief that students who are at risk will graduate from high school and pursue productive lives as adults if they are provided effective interventions, support, and opportunity. The Liberty Partnerships Program is designed to target and remedy specific issues that place individual students in jeopardy of dropping out of school in urban, suburban, and rural communities.
>
> The Liberty Partnerships Program has two purposes: (1) to identify students considered to be at risk of dropping out of school, and (2) to provide those students with services designed to improve their ability to complete high school and achieve successful advancement into postsecondary education and the workforce. The program provides funding and collaborative opportunities for basic and advanced academic skills development through special classes and tutorial services; educational, personal and family counseling; career and college exploration activities; mentoring; and a variety of enrichment activities for students. LPP also provides funding to develop or enhance supportive services for parents/guardians and professional development programs for school personnel and other service providers who work with enrolled LPP students. (*Guidelines for the Liberty Partnerships Program*, 1997, p. 1)

The strength behind the success of the Liberty Partnerships Program lies in the uniqueness of the individual projects. There are 58 different Liberty Programs servicing over 13,000 students throughout New York State. While we all strive toward a common goal, each project is different and can be tailored to fit the needs of the particular student population that participates in the program. The St. John's University College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program has been cited as a model program statewide and the various components all combine to provide a holistic approach aimed at student success.

There are many factors that can determine a student's eligibility to the Liberty Partnerships Program. Once again, a project will have to be designed to meet the specific needs of its population. According to the *Guidelines*:

> Eligible students will be New York State residents enrolled in grades 5 through 12 in public or non-public schools who are at risk of dropping out of school as measured by one or more of the following: (a.) Unsatisfactory academic performance; (b.) Inconsistent school attendance or truancy; (c.) Behavior/discipline problems; (d.) Tradition of family/peers dropping out of school; (e.) Negative change in family circumstances; f. History of child abuse or neglect; (g.) Homelessness/residence in a shelter; (h.) History of substance abuse; (i.) Limited English proficiency; (j.) Teenage pregnancy and/or parenting; (k.) Negative peer pressure; and/or (l.) Other documented factor(s). (*Guidelines for the Liberty Partnerships Program*, 1997, p. 2)

The population in the program will dictate which areas of service are most needed. For the program year 1996-97, 48% of our students were placed in Liberty due to poor academic performance. Our program therefore, has an intensive concentration in a tutoring and special class component. Our largest percentage of students, 52%, are referred to Liberty for a combination of reasons including negative peer pressure, low self-esteem, emotional and/or psychological problems, parent and/or self-referral, and lack of motivation or role model. Each student (307 in 1996-97) is interviewed and assessed regularly to determine what obstacles and barriers are preventing academic success, and a plan for academic achievement is developed which delineates the services available and necessary to assist the student.

The Components of the Program

The strength of the College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program lies in our Saturday Program. We operate six days a week from September through June. On Saturdays, individual and small group tutoring is available to all students in all subjects. Tutoring is conducted from ten am until noon. In addition, tutoring is provided on site in some of our schools, as well as on both St. John's campuses every weekday by appointment. The atmosphere in our Saturday program is very relaxed, and we pride ourselves on being a direct, hands-on program. An important concept behind the personal delivery of services lies in the belief that the students must be made to feel comfortable

in a college environment. Each week students come to our campus to learn and socialize. We are not merely telling them that they can go to college —they are directly involved with people who attend our University and realize that, with hard work, they too, can attain these educational goals. Higher education is not some distant dream but an attainable reality.

In addition to tutoring, we provide group rap sessions for the junior high school and high school students. These are facilitated by social workers and provide a safe arena for students to express their dreams, fears, and frustrations. Individual counseling referrals are made based upon the recommendation of a facilitator. The students gain self-esteem and build camaraderie with one another in these groups. We in turn get to see what issues are developing in the schools and their neighborhoods and can provide workshops and other programming activities to meet these ever changing needs.

A variety of special classes are available each semester to all grade levels which provide the basic and advanced academic skills students need to succeed. As our population of juniors and seniors continues to rise, we conduct three separate SAT Preparation Classes throughout the year. We usually limit the class size to a maximum of 25 students; normally classes contain about 12-15 students. A small, personal learning environment is much more effective than the mass production classes students are subject to in the public schools. We also provide TOEFL Review Classes for our students identified as having limited English proficiency. In addition to these academic review classes, we schedule Study Skills classes that emphasize note-taking techniques and general studying rules. We have had great success with a Leadership Seminar which engaged the students in public speaking, debating, and letter-writing activities. Another popular class is Creative Writing. It is important for students to gain access to alternative means of self-expression. Each year we publish an Annual Scrapbook that contains the stories, poetry, and artwork completed in these classes and other pieces that students have done on their own. This scrapbook has grown in size and quality, and now students look forward to seeing their work published. Computer classes are a big attraction and we run a number of these each semester. Many times students are able to input and edit their own stories in our computer lab. Thus they learn applicable skills while tapping into their creative energy.

Throughout the year we conduct a number of workshops and special events. College Night usually takes place in October and many juniors and seniors take advantage of this event with their parents. Speakers from Admissions and Financial Aid, as well as representatives from Special and Opportunity Programs, address the audience with general information regarding college selection and financial aid procedures. Each year an increase of Liberty students attend St. John's, but we do not force-feed them St. John's information. We understand that we are not the only college or university available and our goal is to help students graduate from high school and attend the college of their choice. However, it is great to have Liberty alumni on our campus and they usually become active in other areas of our program.

Career Afternoon is another popular workshop that informs students of the multitude

of career choices that are available. Practical information regarding job hunting, resume writing, and interview skills are also reviewed. Throughout the year we bring in professionals from various fields to share their story and knowledge with our participants. The goal is to help students responsibly dream and prepare for a personally rewarding future.

Enrichment Activities

Enrichment activities are an integral part of our program. There are innumerable benefits to traveling to different places with students. We have gone on tours of different colleges throughout New York State to expose students to the variety of options that are available to them. Liberty participants have seen Broadway plays, visited museums, and enjoyed a number of recreational activities. The College Bound: New York City and You component is specifically designed to integrate visits to cultural attractions with socialization and interpersonal skills. Many of our trips are open to the Liberty parents as well, thus creating a true "family" atmosphere. Liberty students and parents have toured Washington, D.C., have met with various members of the Senate and Assembly in Albany, and have participated in many activities together—we believe in working with the "whole person" and not just the "student" aspect of the participant.

GATES (Get Away Trips for Educational Seminars) overnight trip is a highlight for the students. Workshops, small group discussions, one-on-one counseling, and recreational time are all incorporated in a weekend trip to Pawling, New York. High school students travel with the Liberty staff for an overnight trip that takes them away from their daily routine and allows them to interact with others and investigate future career and educational paths. A great deal of individual counseling takes place on this weekend since there is privacy and constant contact with staff members.

This year we instituted the First Annual Family GATES trip in September 1996. Seven students and parents accompanied our staff to Pawling for a weekend of communication workshops and parent meetings. This trip enabled the parents to have a weekend away with their child, see them in a different environment, and interact with our staff on a very informal basis. The trip was a huge success and it will become a mainstay in our program. The parents loved a weekend away from their own routine, and we were able to elicit a great deal of suggestions for our program as well as positive feedback on the overall program. It was a rewarding experience to see all who attended this trip benefit from it and return with such positive comments. It was a highlight of the year.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is vital to the success of the College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program. Parents must sign the application to enroll their child in our program if they are targeted by the school as being eligible for participation, and they must sign the recommit form at the end of each year allowing their child to remain in our program. We conduct PACK Meetings (Parents Association for College Bound Kids) six times a

year, allowing the parents to come together in a support network for themselves and our staff. We invite various speakers and professionals who give presentations on topics of interest to the parents which will enable them to cope with their own stresses in a positive way. We also offer a variety of courses through Metropolitan College of St. John's University to parents at a fraction of the actual tuition. This enables the parents to further their own education and present themselves as a role model of the life-long learning process to their children. Parents are our greatest supporters, and without their dedication and active participation, our program would not be as effective. The parents allow us into their lives, as well as the lives of their children, and this bond of trust is something that we never lose sight of in our dealings with the students and overall management of the program.

Mentoring

Another successful component of our program that can be replicated is the Mentoring relationship that each student receives. St. John's undergraduate students volunteer as mentors to our participants. A mentor usually receives a maximum of five student "mentees" who s/he is responsible for contacting on a regular basis. We conduct monthly mentor meetings with all these volunteers to review upcoming activities, discuss any problems they may be encountering, and conduct various workshops and presentations which will enable them to handle the many situations that may arise. Our mentors become big brothers and sisters to our students, and they embody the vision of success through education. Every student in our program receives a mentor, so there is always someone from the program who is in contact with them. The mentoring relationship is strictly confidential, except in the event of an emergency, and the mentors complete general contact sheets which provide a record of their contacts with the mentees. Our mentors accompany us on all trips and activities, and they prove to be an invaluable link between the students and our staff. Many Liberty graduates have become mentors for us, allowing them to be role models for the participants and enabling them to give back something to the program that has helped them succeed.

Communication

Liberty produces a Newsletter that is sent to each participant's home every month informing them of upcoming activities and offerings. All College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program partners receive this, and it has proved to be an important vehicle of communication. There are brochures and a number of publicity items that are distributed during the year which contain our emblem, further publicizing our program and the positive work that we do for the students and community. The annual Recognition Ceremony is always a highlight of the year. Every May we recognize the students, parents, mentors, and all supporters in a standing-room-only ceremony and party. Positive reinforcement is always necessary, and the Recognition Ceremony proves to be a very positive experience.

What is the Impact of the Program?

It is difficult to describe the full impact of the College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program. Ordinary statistics do not do justice to the individual successes we see every day. Last year 92% of our students were promoted to the next grade at the end of June, and even that type of record does not encompass the private victories that each student wins in his or her daily struggles. Liberty is about people, and the hands-on nature of our program keeps us focusing on the individual and their needs as opposed to a cookie-cutter approach. The dedication of the staff and all the volunteers is what separates this program from other programs. When you are able to gather a group of individuals who truly care about and believe in what they are doing, the possibilities are endless.

One of the greatest rewards of working with this program is watching the participants not only graduate from high school, but also graduate from college. Many of our original students are completing their undergraduate education—truly amazing considering they were once at risk of not completing secondary school! That is a tremendous benefit of working with a program over a period of years. We never really lose touch with our former students; whether they attend St. John's or other institutions, they still come back to us and keep us active in their lives. That says a lot of the type of relationship we cultivate over the years.

The St. John's University College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program has received local and national attention as being identified as a model program. The fruits of our labor are evident in the faces and accomplishments of each and every participant in our program. They are the future, and no job is more important than creating a support network for these young people to develop and prosper. It is a privilege to work with Liberty and make a difference in so many lives. "For our youth, for our future" is not just a mere slogan—it accurately reflects the driving force behind our program. The students are definitely "Running on RPM'S.....Responsibility, Pride, Motivation," and they help keep us operating with the same level of enthusiasm. Liberty is a successful program that strives to help every student achieve excellence, and the College Bound: Liberty Partnerships Program has been doing that for over eight years, one participant at a time. With programs such as this, the future does indeed look bright. ■

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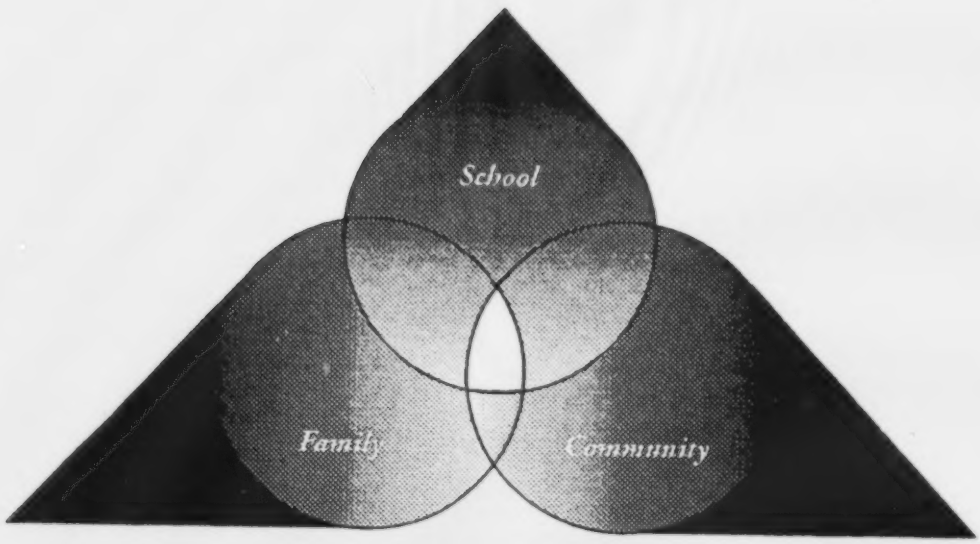

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Chapter 15

Growing Your Own: A Model for Preparing Paraprofessionals to be Fully Certified Teachers in Urban Classrooms

Evelyn Baker Dandy

> They will be teachers, but to the kids they'll reach,
> they'll be heroes. They'll give them hope.
> They'll give them dreams. They'll change their lives.
> (Haselkorn & Fideler, 1996, p. 6)

A child in Georgia can go from first grade to twelfth grade and never have a teacher from his/her home community. Imagine 12 years of schooling without a teacher who listens to the same music, watches the same television programs, enjoys the same foods, gains inspiration from the same kind of worship service or aspires to be like the same role models.

The Pathways program at Armstrong Atlantic State University is answering Georgia's call by taking non-certified school district employees—paraprofessionals, secretaries, substitute teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria managers—who have exemplary work records, better than average grades and a sincere commitment to teaching and offering them tuition and other support so they can take college courses and earn degrees leading to teacher certification. In turn, they must maintain a grade point average of 2.5 or higher and, upon graduation, remain employed by the local public schools for at least three years. Non-certified school personnel make a ready pool for several reasons: they have roots in the community; they often know the homes and families from which students come; they have a clear idea of what teaching is all about; and, they are already involved in community activities.

This effort is accomplished through the collaboration of representatives from three institutions in Savannah: Armstrong Atlantic State University (AASU), Savannah State University and the Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools. Although collaboration among these three units is an important facet of the program, this paper will focus on the connections between Armstrong and the local public schools.

AASU and the Local Public Schools

Founded in 1935, Armstrong is growing rapidly on its present 250-acre site on the

coast of Georgia. AASU employs 235 full-time faculty and offers 75 degree programs to more than 5,400 graduate and under-graduate students. The College of Education moved from fourteenth largest out of 35 institutions in the state of Georgia producing teachers to seventh largest in 1996. It is the only university to offer education degrees in coastal Georgia. In 1995, AASU was first in the state among majority institutions in the number of minority students enrolled in student teaching, and it led all institutions when minority teaching interns were included in the count. While the University's minority enrollment has now approached 19%, in the College of Education, minorities account for 27%, a number that is progressively increasing with credit due largely to the Pathways Program.

Armstrong's teacher education graduates have a 97% pass rate on the required Georgia Teacher Certification Test. Twenty-two per cent of the teachers in Armstrong's service areas are AASU graduates, and 52% of the individual school nominees for teacher of the year are graduates of AASU.

The Savannah-Chatham County Public School District (SCCPS) is a K-14 school district that serves 55,000 students, employs 2,500 teachers and staffs 44 schools as well as a district office, satellite facilities and community-based programs. The SCCPS teachers are categorized as 35% Black, 64% White and 1% other. Minorities make up approximately 66% of the student body, but 66% of the retentions, 80% of suspensions and only 59% of the high school graduates. SCCPS representatives serve directly on the advisory committee of the Pathways Program. These individuals have been most helpful in providing direction for the recruitment, screening and placement of graduates.

The Selection Process

Since a program is only as good as its students, the major strength of the Pathways Program is its screening process. The Advisory Committee, composed of representatives from SCCPS, the University's College of Education and the School of Arts and Sciences, has designed the following criteria.

Program applicants must be classified as non-certified personnel; exhibit an exemplary work record at SCCPS; qualify for regular admission to the University; have a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 on all college work; pass a required security check; declare education as their major; maintain a 2.5 GPA once in the program; commit to teaching in SCCPS inner city schools; obligate to teaching at least 3 years after program completion.

Preliminary applications, secured through the University or the SCCPS Department of Human Resources, include brief demographic data and require a 200-300 word essay on "Why I want to become a teacher." A faculty committee from AASU's School of Arts and Sciences uses a blind scoring process for initial essays. Those whose essays do not pass are sent rejection letters. Applicants with passing essays are directed to complete secondary application packets that require them to describe an educational dilemma they have faced and submit three detailed performance recommendations from their immediate supervisor and two teachers in their current school.

The Screening Committee, composed of the Director, a principal, representatives from SCCPS Human Resources, the College of Education, the School of Arts and Sciences, and the Minority Affairs Officer, survey completed packets to determine which applicants will be invited for an interview. Applicants are rejected if they do not meet the preliminary requirements listed above.

During the interview, applicants are required to write an additional essay detailing how they plan to manage their schedule if they should be accepted into the program. The interview is designed to assess oral presentation skills, leadership ability, level of commitment, and judgment in solving educational dilemmas. Applicants complete an oral reading designed to determine their ability to communicate with an audience. The Screening Committee votes on each applicant. Scholars are required to sign an acceptance form as well as a contract describing their obligations to the Program. The contract is countersigned by the Program Director and the SCCPS Executive Director of Human Resources.

Program Successes

From nearly 700 applications the committee has screened, 78 have been accepted as "Scholars" (25 Black males, 48 Black females, 1 White male and 4 White females). Since there is a serious shortage in this demographic group, particular emphasis is placed upon recruiting African American males. African Americans make up the largest subgroup (94%), and 6% are Caucasian, while males constitute 33% of the total and females 67%.

Fifty-eight per cent are married, with an additional 15% reporting they are separated, divorced or widowed, and 27% reporting being single. The majority of the Scholars (71%), regardless of marital status, have children—at least three per family. Fifty-five per cent of the Scholars are pursuing bachelor's degrees and 45% have degrees and are seeking certification.

AASU's Scholars have a 95% pass rate on the Georgia Teachers Certification Test with a mean collective score of 342.74. A score of 320 is passing. To date, 30 Scholars have graduated from the Program. Their collective GPA is 3.08. Twenty-five graduates are employed in SCCPS (10 African American males, 1 White male, 11 African American females and 3 White females). Of the remaining graduates, one African American male is teaching part time at a local business college, one Black female is teaching in Atlanta, two serve as substitute teachers for SCCPS, and one, a White female is currently unemployed.

Six Scholars received their school's nomination for Sallie Mae First Year Teacher of the Year award and one Black male has been nominated as his school's 1997 Teacher of the Year. All Scholars who are teaching have received "satisfactory" ratings on the Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument. AASU's program has been cited by the University System of Georgia as one of the five very best programs for student retention (92%).

The Pathways Program in Savannah was featured in a 30-minute television

documentary sponsored by the National Education Association in the School Stories segment titled "The Drive to Teach" and aired on The Learning Channel on November 3, 1996 and January 5, 1997. Additionally, two 5-minute sound bytes entitled "Combating Learned Helplessness" and "Mentoring" are available on the NEA website, and the documentary is available for purchase.

Elijah West, one of the early graduates, was awarded the Bill Smith Scholarship from the National Association for Alternative Educational Preparation and Certification. The Director was awarded the local "Savannah Champions of Excellence Award" for leadership by the Board of Trustees of Savannah Country Day School. The Director and Scholars have presented papers at 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997 AACTE conferences, the 1995, 1996 and 1997 Youth-At-Risk Conferences, First Annual Pedagogy of the Oppressed Conference, 1995 and 1996 Recruiting New Teachers Conferences, the Symposium on Recruiting Minority Teachers, three NEA Leadership Conferences, the Georgia ACTE Conference and the 1997 American Educational Research Association's Conference.

Ed Daniels, a 1996 graduate of the Program, was recently featured in the two local newspapers. He has been instrumental in securing an AmeriCorps grant that provides after school mentoring and tutoring to 200 middle school students. Daniels, a former insurance salesman, has organized 18 volunteer tutors (college students) in local community centers to assist these at risk students with conflict resolution and direct them in community service activities. This "3:00 0' Clock Program" has documented increases in standardized test scores and a decrease in suspensions.

Unique Features of the Program

Friday replacements. This is a win-win arrangement for Scholars, their supervising teachers, school principals and AASU senior level education majors. Notices are sent to qualified majors who sign an agreement to replace a given Scholar every Friday during the quarter. (The Program uses interest monies earned from the Grant to pay them $25.00 per week.) Scholars, released with full pay, are responsible for orienting their replacements, informing them of school regulations, providing plans, and reporting the number of hours their replacement worked. On Fridays, the University offers two five-credit classes, often in one of the local schools. Scholars spend a portion of their time learning theory and the other portion in classrooms with children, putting theory into practice.

Principals are pleased with this arrangement because their most valuable paraprofessionals are replaced at no cost to the school, and they can observe potential student teachers. Education majors have an opportunity to engage in authentic classroom experiences and earn up to $100.00 per month. This arrangement allows Scholars to take a full load of courses, thus reducing the amount of time they are away from their own families.

How to Improve Your GPA Workshops. All Scholars whose GPA was a 2.5 or lower were identified and required to complete a series of tasks. Initially, each was counseled

by the program director to determine their immediate goals and priorities. The College of Education counselor held a mandatory four-hour workshop on learning styles and study strategies. Each Scholar met individually with the counselor and outlined a plan of action for GPA improvement. Grades were monitored very closely for four consecutive quarters. All Scholars were identified on mid-term roles and faculty were asked to report any mid-term grade of *C* or below. Scholars whose grades were reported were required to schedule conferences with their professor to discern specific things they must do to improve. These Scholars were offered free tutoring, free copies in the library, and additional reference materials as well as mentoring by the Director and other Scholars who had taken the course. DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest, sponsor of this grant, had also appropriated monies for an emergency fund designated to assist Scholars with unexpected emergencies such as child care, transportation problems and materials to support course work. Scholars were made aware of this support. After two quarters, Scholars who failed to improve their GPA were placed on probation and given two more quarters to improve. Those Scholars whose GPA continued to suffer were asked to leave the Program. Fourteen out of 22 Scholars exhibited GPA improvement. Six were asked to leave the Program, and two dropped out of the Program.

Building on Cultural Resources. The Program at AASU has developed a family-like atmosphere that uses cultural resources to provide encouragement and inspiration to the Scholars. Scholars report that, aside from financial support, this focus has been the most helpful in helping to develop resiliency. Workshops on topics such as "Moving from 'Para' to 'Professional,'" "Codeswitching to the Standard Dialect," "Managing Your Finances," and "1996 Revival" are held quarterly. Workshops begin and end with meditation during which all attendees join in a circle and hold hands. Home-cooked food is served, and gospel music is always a part of the program, frequently rendered by the Scholars themselves. Scholars are encouraged to bring their spouses and their children, for whom special sessions are provided. Incentive awards are presented at all meetings, and ample time is provided for Scholars to network among themselves to exchange ideas and share notes as well as resources. Additionally, Scholars are encouraged to form study groups and car pools and cooperate on baby sitting responsibilities. The Director has nurtured a climate of trust that encourages Scholars to talk though their problems and conflicts with her and with one another. The Pathways office serves as a haven for Scholars who come on campus and just want to share their news.

Graduates are often hired to provide tutoring for those who are still going through the Program. Special themed workshops allow the graduates to share their wisdom with brief role playing activities on such topics as "The Appropriate Way to Approach a Professor," "Preparing for the Interview," and "Techniques on Portfolio Development." Faculty who teach the Scholars are encouraged to emphasize techniques that work well with children who live in urban environments. All lesson plans must include a statement of relevance and focus on participatory activities with ample opportunities for oral language development. Assignments encourage the use of materials and resources

available in most urban homes. Assessment incorporates affective as well as cognitive growth. Community site visits include several local museums that house collections featuring the rich history and accomplishments of local artisans. Students are encouraged to discuss these fieldtrips, write about them and teachers use these discussions to teach the required objectives.

Conclusion

Universities can significantly improve their recruitment, retention and graduation rates for minority students. A pool that has been largely overlooked—paraprofessionals—can and do make exceptional teachers. Individuals involved in the leadership of such efforts must be dedicated to improving education in urban environments. Applicants must have exemplary work records, better than average grades, impressive speaking and writing skills, and a commitment to teaching in urban environments. Programs that support such "Scholars" must provide financial support, faculty who are willing to become mentors, flexible scheduling, and theory into practice instruction that builds on the strengths of the community. Program directors must maintain a good rapport with local school district officials, serve as campus advocate for the Scholars, provide ample opportunities for networking, develop incentives for program completion and build on cultural resources that inspire and encourage resiliency. Grants such as those provided by DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest have made it possible to discern the necessary ingredients to develop a model that can be used by other universities to grow their own by tapping into the pool of already competent paraprofessionals. ■

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Chapter 16

Interdisciplinary Teaming in High School: The Gotta Be Team

Deborah Thomas

Many American high school students experience school failure each year. For most adolescents who are unsuccessful at school, poor academic performance is just one of a cluster of problems that characterize their lives (Carnegie, 1995). Other problems may include poor school attendance, negative school attitudes, discipline problems, involvement in high risk behaviors, and perilous social relationships. In addition, unsuccessful students report feeling alienated at school and low levels of efficacy and autonomy (Hargreaves, Earl, & Ryan, 1996). The ubiquitous label, "at risk," serves as a catch all for these students who exist in the margins of school.

Teachers and administrators at Groves High School in Savannah, Georgia recognized that a disproportionate number of their students were experiencing school failure. As one of the school-wide efforts to address this problem, four teachers volunteered to develop a tenth-grade interdisciplinary team for these at-risk students. Recognizing that school failure was only one of several at risk indicators, these four teachers believed that to meet students' academic needs, they must also address their social, physical, and emotional needs. Hence, an enhanced interdisciplinary curriculum, new teaching strategies, relevant learning experiences, a supportive learning environment, and caring teachers were needed to help at-risk students form an attachment to school and develop school behaviors conducive to success rather than failure.

Bonnie Waring, Annette Moore, Robin Holmes, and Todd Whittemore began the process of developing their tenth-grade team during the summer of 1995. Because of my experience with middle school teams, they invited me to work with them. This article examines how these tenth-grade teachers developed interdisciplinary teaming at the high school level. Specific organizational tasks and decisions that guide team interactions and functioning are described. Of particular importance for this team of teachers was helping students to develop a sense of belonging to the team and school. The ideas carried out by the teachers to accomplish this goal are presented along with the curriculum changes they made. Jumping forward to the following June, the article

ends with the results from the first year of teaming and lessons learned that may help other high schools to develop teams.

Developing the Team Process

The four teachers and I spent a week together in June developing the team concept and planning the curriculum. The first task of the summer workshop was to learn about interdisciplinary teaming. Since professional literature that addresses teaming at the high school level is scarce, middle school teaming research and practice was used to develop a knowledge base and starting point for this high school interdisciplinary team.

Research on interdisciplinary teaming suggests that issues related to organization and team functioning should be addressed in the early stages of teaming (Erb & Doda, 1989). We decided team member expectations (see Appendix A), team rules and consequences (see Appendix B), and an agenda for team meetings that included the following items: student issues, curriculum issues, team issues, school issues, records/ paperwork, and other items. The process of developing these necessary structural guidelines provided teachers an opportunity to learn more about each other and begin forming a bond that would continue to strengthen throughout the school year. The final organizational task was to identify team members' roles and responsibilities (see Appendix C). In addition to providing an efficient way of attending to team tasks, this allowed the strengths of each individual to be utilized and provided a system of accountability.

Early in our exploration of effective teaming practices we discovered that team names and themes contribute to the development of a team identity. Building this identity enhances the likelihood of replacing feelings of alienation with a sense of belonging. Borrowing from the song "You Gotta Be" by singer Dis'ree, the teachers decided the team name "Gotta Be" captured the spirit and determination they wanted the students to exhibit. We discussed how we felt this song related to the students' lives. One teacher commented that many of their students viewed life as sheer survival, whether at home or at school. The team wanted to help students move from "striving to survive" to "striving to succeed." "Surviving life's challenges today leads to success tomorrow" became the team motto that reflected this goal.

Developing Interdisciplinary Themes

Using this motto as a beginning point for curriculum development, the teachers identified four challenge areas, one for each nine-weeks, as themes for interdisciplinary study. The first unit, *school challenges*, addressed issues such as promotion requirements, school and team rules, time management, leisure time, goal setting, study skills, and communication. *Relationship challenges*, the second unit, was next with a focus on decision-making, peer relationships, family relationships, conflict resolution, and values/ character education. During the third nine weeks, the third unit, *health challenges*, provided students an opportunity to explore eating habits and disorders, exercise, drugs/

alcohol awareness, sex education, and communicable diseases. *Future challenges*, the final unit, examined career opportunities, job skills, money management, and post secondary education. Communication skills, decision-making, and setting and achieving goals were woven throughout all four units.

We brainstormed and agreed on many activities and learning experiences for each of these themes including field trips, research projects, and guest speakers. As exciting as this process was, the realities of teaching taxed our creative thoughts as we struggled with carrying out these themes and also meeting subject area and state required Quality Core Curriculum objectives. After giving ourselves permission to feel overwhelmed for a few minutes, we focused on our goal of making school relevant through an interdisciplinary approach. This required developing a basic knowledge of the content and skills in each of the four subject areas. To develop this awareness, we spent an afternoon creating charts of the different subject areas with topics, skills, and concepts listed. We posted the charts on the wall and were amazed at the connections we identified across the subject areas. We then decided where and how required content and skills could fit with our four themes. What had seemed impossible hours earlier now provided even more possibilities.

Knowing that they would have to convince students that this would be a year unlike any they have experienced in order to get them at least to give it a try, the teachers developed a skit and orientation program for the first day of school. T-shirts were made, banners and posters were printed, the words to "You Gotta Be" memorized, speakers were contacted, field trips were set, and energy and hopes were high.

Student Response to Team and Themes

In June 1996, the four teachers were still filled with energy and enthusiasm. Though some changes were made along the way, the experiences that developed from the plans made the previous summer far exceeded their expectations. The success of the Gotta Be Team was known by all in the school. Sixty-one of the seventy-three students on the team were promoted. The previous year, 86% of these students had a school discipline record on file; only 46% had a discipline record on file for 1995-96. Attendance improved 37%. Student surveys indicated that students felt being on the Gotta Be Team was a positive experience (see Appendix D). With pride, the teachers joked that the school now had three groups of students, the Gotta Be's (new 10th graders entering the team), the Usta Be's (former Gotta Be's) and the Wanna Be's (everyone else). Because of this team's success, the principal decided that the entire ninth grade would be formed into three interdisciplinary teams for the following school year. While excited about this decision, the Gotta Be teachers were also saddened because they could not work together the next year. Two teachers would remain on the Gotta Be Team. The other two would go to separate teams for the ninth grade. The "lessons learned" by the Gotta Be Team will provide a foundation for these future high school teams.

Lessons Learned to Guide High School Teaming

Get to know your team members. Collegial relationships do not just happen; they develop through planning and work. The Gotta Be teachers made a data sheet where they listed their phone numbers, hobbies, interests, spouse and children's names, birthdays, and other personal information they wanted to share about themselves. Todd's birthday was first and the other teachers surprised him with a cake and card. Todd identified their celebration of his birthday as the "glue that cemented him to the team." As the only male, the only Caucasian, and the only first-year teacher, Todd admitted at first he wondered if he would fit in. Those concerns were soon replaced with feelings of connection and collegiality.

Even more important than getting to know each other personally, was getting to know each other professionally. During the summer workshop, time was provided to discuss beliefs about teaching and learning. The teachers also shared teaching strategies, classroom management concerns and techniques, and their strengths and weaknesses as teachers. This sharing opened new avenues of communication not typically experienced by high school teachers (Hargreaves, Earl, & Ryan, 1996).

Make organizational decisions early in the teaming process. An organizational structure is needed to guide team functioning. As a team, decide team guidelines, team member expectations, team rules and consequences, team member roles and responsibilities, and an agenda for team meetings. These decisions should be typed and included in a team notebook for each teacher. Review these documents often during the early months of teaming and whenever team functioning is inconsistent.

Focus on curriculum. After addressing team organization, determine how the team will plan and implement curriculum. Some teams, like the Gotta Be Team, are eager to develop interdisciplinary units early in the teaming process. Most teams, however, need to move more slowly with curriculum efforts. Teams must decide what is reasonable and doable for them. Ignoring curriculum is unacceptable; some degree of change in what is taught and/or how it is taught is required. The goal is to expand and enhance interdisciplinary curriculum development each year. This can only be achieved by teams taking time to discuss their individual content areas; sharing ideas for making content connections; discussing their students' needs, interests, and concerns; and increasing their knowledge and understanding of interdisciplinary curriculum.

Develop a team identity. This is especially important for at-risk students who tend to feel that their teachers and classmates do not like or care about them (Oakes, 1985). Team names, themes, mottos, t-shirts, songs, cheers, and chants help to create connections to the team and a sense of belonging. Gotta Be teachers usually started the school day by having students repeat the team motto and stating or writing what it meant to them. They often played the team song, "You Gotta Be," and asked students what impact particular words or thoughts in the song had on them. If possible, focus the curriculum around the team name, motto, and themes as the Gotta Be Team did.

Work with counselors and others who make scheduling decisions. This is critical at the high school level. Because of content specialization, the fact that high school teachers often teach more than one grade, and usually only a specific population or grade level will be teamed, scheduling high school teams is problematic. Those doing the scheduling must understand the teaming concept and the need for a team of teachers to teach a shared group of students during a common instructional time. These goals are almost impossible to achieve if team scheduling occurs after creating a master school schedule. The needs of the team must be considered at the beginning of the scheduling process.

Administrator and school-wide support is necessary. Teams are usually implemented in high schools as an effort to reduce school failure and improve student performance. Administrators and teachers, including those not involved in teaming, must recognize that teaming is more than just an organizational arrangement. It requires changes in the way curriculum is developed and implemented. Administrators must support and encourage team teachers as they work to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum. This work cannot be accomplished without adequate planning time and on-going staff development. A daily common planning time for team teachers is necessary as well as other opportunities for in-depth planning. Administrators must also be prepared and willing to provide funds necessary to implement this curriculum. Field trips, special events and celebrations, and additional resources enhance interdisciplinary teaming. Every effort should be made to provide additional funding for interdisciplinary teaming.

To allay fears of "dumbing down the curriculum," all teachers need to understand interdisciplinary teaming. Opportunities for team teachers to continue participation in department meetings are vital to keep them connected with the wider school and to address articulation concerns for teamed students.

Keep teacher teams intact for several years. Teaming is a developmental process (George, 1982; Pickler, 1987). When an experienced and functioning team like the Gotta Be Team is divided to "share the wealth," a lack of team stability develops. Team members are at various stages of team development. One or more members may feel frustrated because they are not doing more as a team, others may feel inadequate or resentful. Changing team membership yearly also inhibits the development of good models of teaming that other teams can look to for support and guidance (Thomas, 1997). Team continuity is necessary so that each year builds upon and extends prior learning and experiences.

Conclusion

Interdisciplinary teaming is widespread in middle schools but is just beginning to be recognized as appropriate at the high school level. This recognition appears to be influenced by research studies of middle school interdisciplinary teaming and studies of at-risk students on one hand and the intensification of student achievement problems that plague high schools on the other. Interdisciplinary teaming provides opportunities for more positive relationships among students, among teachers, and between students

and teachers. The likelihood of students developing a sense of belonging and purpose is enhanced. Teachers have increased opportunities to develop a curriculum that is more relevant, interesting, and engaging. These findings (Erb & Doda, 1989; Hargreaves, Earl, & Ryan, 1996) offer hope for the dismal portrait of the at-risk student as alienated, unmotivated and bored by an irrelevant and monotonous curriculum, and overwhelmed by feelings that no one cares (Oakes, 1985; Wehlage & Rutter, 1986). With public pressure on high schools to improve student achievement, high schools are slowly becoming more willing to alter the traditional organization and curriculum arrangements.

Restructuring high school organization and curriculum to an interdisciplinary perspective requires teachers to make changes in the way they view content areas, structure their classrooms and assignments, and work with other teachers. These changes are not a quick fix. They take time, effort, commitment, and a willingness to change. Furthermore, merely making the organizational change to teaming is not enough. Systematic effort must also focus on teacher collaboration, curriculum, and instruction. ■

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Appendix A
TEAM MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

1. Attend all team meetings and be on time.
2. Decisions will be reached with a consensus opinion.
3. We will exhibit cooperation, honesty, openness, trust, support, and flexibility.
4. Conflicts will be settled within the team if possible. If not, an administrator will be consulted.
5. There will be an agenda and record keeping for all meetings.
6. Stay on task.
7. Extended time substitutes will attend team meetings.
8. Team members should not take decisions personally.
9. If team members are upset, they should air their feelings at a team meeting or tell someone on the team.

Appendix B
GOTTA BE TEAM RULES AND EXPECTATIONS

1. Be on time to class.
2. Homework will be accepted on the due date only.
3. Missed assignments due to excused absences must be made up within five days.
4. Eating and drinking will be permitted in the designated areas of the school.
5. Gum is permitted as long as it is not seen or heard.
6. Respect and care for school property.
7. Respect teacher and fellow classmates.
8. Hall passes will be written in emergency cases only.
9. Bring all class materials daily (textbook, portfolio, writing utensil).
10. . . . .S M I L E ! ! !

CONSEQUENCES

1. warning
2. discussion with teacher
3. lose privilege
4. call to parent
5. detention
6. referral

Appendix C
TEAM MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Team Leader

- Facilitates team functioning.
- Represents team to school at-large.
- Communicates team activities and concerns to administration.
- Facilitates team meetings and works with record-keeper to develop team meeting agenda.
- Serves as the instructional leader for the team.

Record Keeper

- Works with team leader to develop team meeting agenda and distributes copies to all members.
- Records minutes from team meetings, distributes copies to team members, maintains minutes and all team notes in team notebook.
- Distributes needed information to members.
- Keeps the team calendar and informs members of upcoming events.

Special Events Coordinator

- Handles necessary details for field trips, guest speakers, and team celebrations.
- Works with record-keeper to develop letters to parents about special events.
- Facilitates student award activities.
- Works with record-keeper to keep members informed of upcoming events.

Home/School Coordinator

- Communicates team activities to school, parents, and community.
- Contacts parents about team concerns and schedules parent conferences.
- Keeps record of parent contacts.
- Schedules student conferences and follows up on recommendations.

Appendix D
STUDENT EVALUATION

1.	I understand the theme of the "Gotta Be Team."	Yes: 86%
2.	I like knowing that all of my teachers were working together on the same theme.	Yes: 86%
3.	I enjoyed doing the hands-on activities.	Yes: 86%
4.	Working on the same theme in all Gotta Be classes helped me see the connection between my cluster classes.	Yes: 78%
5.	felt this learning experience was a positive one.	Yes: 90%
6.	I liked the audiovisual materials my teacher used.	Yes: 86%
7.	I liked the rewards my teachers gave for good work.	Yes: 82%
8.	The activities on the team kept my interest and attention.	Yes: 86%
9.	I would like to see more activities like the ones on the team.	Yes: 86%
10.	I would recommend that other schools use teams like the Gotta Be Team.	Yes: 63%

Chapter 17

The Teacher as Entrepreneur: A Diverse Approach to Teacher Education

Judy Shasek

Edupreneurship is a book (also offered as a seminar, workshop, or course offering) that enhances educational strategies with entrepreneurship. It is a topic that should become a part of the methodology used by teaching professionals. It could easily be included in training for all post secondary students seeking a teaching certificate, as well as in professional development training.

This book grew from personal experiences at Perry Middle School from 1993 until 1997. *Edupreneurship* emerged from teaching experiences as we began to put a label on the strategies that were bringing us so much success with our very challenging middle school population. The more I talked with other teachers from Florida and around the country, it seemed they were all looking for a similar set of new tools.

The book is written to provide practical applications for immediate use in the classroom. The first chapter makes the case for why this particular training is necessary for pre-practice educators in colleges and universities, as well as in-service professional development. Hopefully, it will be used by decision makers at colleges, universities and local school districts.

The Problem

The public school system has undergone rapid and diverse changes in the past decade. The advances in technology, global "shrinking," economic pressures, disintegration of the traditional family unit and the impact of television have brought new and challenging demands upon our teachers. Parallel changes have made similar demands in the business community. Traditional methods are no longer effective in either business or education. Teachers can no longer be managers, we must have leaders manning our classrooms.

The gap between the workplace and school is, by necessity, closing. Business leaders realize that they must have a stake in the education of their future work force. Teachers realize that they must develop and nurture partnerships with the community and businesses in order to have the resources necessary to meet the increased and ever changing needs of the students. Teaching in a rapidly changing world, is no less difficult than doing business today.

Budget cuts and limitations seem to occur just when classroom size and demands are high. Teachers must learn how to create their own resources of capital and shareholders. Venture capital is to a business as grants or partnerships are to a class or school. Just being pro-active and effective in the classroom, no matter how technically expert one is at the subject matter, is not enough any more.

In the business world, even in corporate America, necessary entrepreneurial strategies are developed and practiced. They provide a nimble, innovative, well planned, and effective manner of meeting the needs of the "customer" while generating healthy "profits" for the businessperson. Can similar entrepreneurial strategies be applied to the classroom rendering the teacher more effective, the student more motivated, the community more involved and the learning more relevant and useful?

The Bureau of Census reports that everyday 1,600,000 children ages 5-14 are left alone after school and over half million start the day without adult supervision. Seventy-five percent of day care centers are rated as providing only minimal care. Every day 2,200 teenagers drop out of school, 500 new teens experiment with drugs, 1,000 more teens turn to alcohol and 1,200 commit suicide. Parents worry about their children and their future and teachers are handed enormous challenges to provide worlds more than the 3 R's. A systemic change is needed, one that can occur one teacher at a time.

As we train the educators who will be accomplishing great things in the next, challenging decades, a mix of education courses and entrepreneurial tactics are necessary. That strategy will produce *Edupreneurs*. There are two audiences for *Edupreneurial* learning: teachers already in the classroom and future educators still in college.

Future teachers, looking out beyond the ivy covered walls at the challenges "out there," may lose confidence in their ability to meet the demands and needs of today's student. They may decide not to complete their degree in education and/or seek a different career choice. Teachers already in the classroom become frustrated, burned out or overwhelmed. It must be acknowledged that there is a sense of isolation, a lack of control and choice among teaching professionals that is not present in a career path followed by the entrepreneur.

Mission of *Edupreneurship*

There are a number of purposes and goals of *Edupreneurship*. These include: (a) To redefine and revitalize professional development courses for an increasingly diverse student population by adding an entrepreneurial training component; (b) to prepare teachers and under-graduate educators to succeed in a workplace that is affected by a rapidly changing economy, social structure and technology; (c) to provide tools and a learning environment that is individualized enough to meet the needs of teachers with varied and diverse styles; (d) to provide educators tools with which to successfully deal with a rapidly changing work world for which we are preparing our students; (e) to prepare educators to understand and apply information technologies in the classroom; (f) to provide future teachers with the ability to develop innovations, collaborations and partnerships in education/business that meet the changing social needs of their students;

and (g) to net the greatest dividends in student learning from the resources spent on teacher education and professional development.

Program Design: College or University Degree Seeking Educator

A program of *Edupreneurship* (entrepreneurship plus education) teaches skills and attitudes that create success. This success will serve the college student not only while he/she is pursuing a degree, but in the classroom as a professional, as well. The art of managing a business is similar to the art of managing students, curriculum, parents, administration and the community.

A good teacher, like a good business person must have a basic drive, energy, good sense and a passion for the work. Some of these qualities cannot be programmed into a person. To guide a young adult through the route to a higher education and a career life plan, training can be provided to make him/her better! Entrepreneurship is a *process* that can be taught and coached.

A teacher can not afford to stand in front of a class and spout knowledge any more. A teacher must be able to meet a huge variety of social, emotional and academic needs in each student. A great concept is not learned if there is no relevance. Just like an entrepreneur, a teacher must learn to be "customer aware." The bank of knowledge and work place skills valued and taught today will be drastically different by the time today's students are ready for a career.

Learning how to learn, how to analyze, problem solve, create, define, question and create solutions has replaced traditional curricula. Outcome based education, performance standards and core competencies students are expected to acquire, confirm education's primary focus.

For success, an entrepreneur says, "For what opportunity do I have an unfair advantage?" Knowing that, an entrepreneur can *own* a service or market niche, creating wealth while having a passion for what he does. A student's "unfair advantage" is the recognition of his or her own skills, aptitudes, passions and learning styles. That recognition affords motivation, passion for the learning and fun in the process. A teacher's "unfair advantage" is a diverse bag of tricks, passion for her work and a network of support, including partners, to fill in the weak spots, handle the overload of challenges, needs and experience. As a teacher, you cannot order a child to learn but you have a responsibility for his learning just the same. That is similar to an entrepreneur who has no authority to order a customer to buy, but has that responsibility. Entrepreneurial training for the educator is a valuable tool with immediate relevance. The relevance extends to all stakeholders.

The courses required for a business degree teach how to market, sell, use databases and write a business plan. The route to an education degree should provide a teacher access to lists, databases of services, contracts and networks in their home city. Teaching future teachers how to create a horizontal structure within their class and within their community will make them feel a part of a team. This could begin to take effect while the pre-service educator is pursuing his or her degree. Students in a degree program

need to learn how to be team members by participating in a program of study that encourages choice and control. Having practiced those skills and experienced them in their own learning, future teachers can incorporate horizontal structure for strong team work when they begin teaching. For practicing teachers, professional development classes can be added to provide those same skills. How wonderful to face the class knowing, " I am not alone—we are in this together."

A teacher is fueled by knowledge, experiences, contacts, resources and skills. Howard Stevenson of Harvard's School of Business Administration defines an entrepreneurship as, "The pursuit of opportunity without regard to the resources at hand." We would to be that kind of determined, passionate teacher. We need that sort of passion in order to involve today's parent and the community. Knowing how to communicate with those who can become shareholders requires training and practice that is more often provided business majors than education majors. This book will show you how to bridge that gap! Edupreneurship is about gaining strategies and tools. What they never taught in "teacher school," such as, Writing a business plan; Managing risk and change; Predicting results and action; Building a strong culture; R&D—designing and building the model.

Writing a business plan is different than writing a lesson plan. It is a skill that can be learned and demonstrated to be highly relevant. Each teacher gets a class—her resources at hand—and she must pursue the learning adventure with those resources so that there is opportunity for all. The format of a business plan and the organization and research required to develop one will pay off in objectives that are met. Clear objectives, shared objectives, shared culture and mission lead to prediction and motivation in both a business and a learning environment. In fact, a good company now calls themselves a "learning organization." There is much to learn for business people and for educators. *Edupreneurship* included as professional development will help develop those skills.

Stability and Predictability

Stability and predictability are becoming more and more rare in our society and in the home. Students can create their own predictability when they learn how to be critical thinkers and when they master the art of scientific method. In the work world nothing is certain. Entrepreneurial and educational success comes from making life predictable for others. No one needs to be told that, just like in the business world, in the classroom there is always risk, change and unpredictability.

Much of what is done in business, as in teaching, has to do with managing risk and change. We can develop expertise over time in managing risk *and* we can teach it to our students. We can learn how to predict results and actions. This skill is critical in leading people in an effort. Survival requires action, action that will have consequences in the future. That future might be a test on Friday, a wise choice or decision in the neighborhood Tuesday, or a decision to stay in school three years from now. Without confidence (and practice) in prediction and decision making, we cannot decide what to do. Teachers are thrown into classes filled with 30 or more unpredictable bundles of talents, needs,

personalities and demands. Colleges and school districts owe it to teachers to provide them confidence and practice in their ability to chart a predictable course.

Such a course requires a detailed plan. The art of writing a "business" plan demands a new type of thinking and examining options so that a predictable outcome can be expected. At present such training is not offered either the undergraduate or the practicing teacher. This book will provide a guide to any educator seeking ways to manage his career path most successfully and with the most satisfaction.

Unpredictability is the mortal enemy of purposeful action. In the past, religion, sciences and various organizations, even the family, have helped us to deal with a world beyond our control. The facts are changing, knowledge and boundaries are rapidly expanding and changing. School become the home for acquiring the tools to deal with the unpredictability of those changes. We must first begin by providing the means for students to acquire those tools for a sense of control, focus and direction before they enter the workplace. Learning to do this does not happen by accident, but it can be learned using a well implemented model. Service Learning is just one strategy that provides such a model. This is covered thoroughly in the Service Learning chapter.

Great leaders build strong cultures—in a nation, in a business, in a classroom. Companies like IBM, Gateway 2000, 3COM, Motorola, Frito-Lay, S. Wagner, Nike and Disney have a strong culture. In a strong culture, members agree with an over-all philosophy, a mission. Creating agreement that allows for predictability is a primary job for the entrepreneur, for the teacher/edupreneur. If all shareholders look at an environment (or a curriculum) in the same way we'll agree on what action to take. More importantly, we'll agree to invest our own talents and energies in that action.

Humans are adverse to discontinuity. We need a model. Teachers need to know how to create and nurture a model. They need to know how to design a model that works. That is no different than designing a product or prototype and testing it to be sure that it works. Once a student has been able to practice the model they hope to use in a classroom, predictability and confidence are assured. Hypothesizing what might happen with discipline in such an environment would make a fascinating research project.

Skinner made pigeons go crazy when he alternated reward and punishment. The pigeons, just like we humans, needed predictability. They needed a model that could be depended upon. Howard Stevenson explains, "One of the reasons a lot of people are becoming entrepreneurs is that their model of the world is broken." Nowhere is this more true than in the schools. Teachers need a new entrepreneurial direction. Diversity, transition, family structure and work place changes have broken models teachers have gone by for decades. The entrepreneur, and the teacher, succeeds by showing others how to move ahead successfully. There must be a plan to fall back on when control is lost. Predictability must be re-established. *Edupreneurship* provides workable strategies to use right now.

In World War II Winston Churchill did not become a great leader by promising a good time. He said, "Expect blood, sweat and tears." That is a sign of a good leader, a good teacher. Make the experience predictable. Entrepreneurs deal with unpredictability

by getting people to look at the world the same way. The world can be as small as a lab activity or a vocabulary study activity. The group must agree on how to evaluate the outcomes. Teachers must be trained to develop a realistic understanding of human nature and how to lead the group to understand that they are a part of something bigger than themselves.

Entrepreneurship can be taught as specific skills. Real success is about practicing and developing a deep understanding of and a deep relationship with people who want you to succeed. This is a key component to the entrepreneurial course of study to be taught in the college setting to future teachers. If they feel a part of something bigger than themselves while in college, if they are a part of a group of people who want them to succeed, they will. Students will ask, "Am I making the world more or less predictable for those with whom I deal and whom I lead?" If the answer is YES, there is nothing that person cannot do.

Additional Strategies

In addition to traditional undergraduate course study in education methods and theory, *Edupreneur* students receive training in entrepreneurial methods of communication, management, writing business plans, marketing, gaining venture capital (grants, volunteers and partnerships) and product development (curriculum, authentic assessment, portfolio). Students work collaboratively on problems designed to deepen their understanding of concepts essential to their course work (theory, techniques, philosophy) and to the future applications of that course work. These sessions are overseen by educators or graduate students who are versed in the educational theories and also in entrepreneurial strategies and methods. Such experiences lead students to become facilitators rather than lecturers. A beneficial by-product of this collaboration is mentoring by members of the business school. Awareness of the tie between school/business/community nurtures habits of involvement in education by our future business leaders.

Students also use distance learning technology to communicate with and experience seminar and class activities being taught by experts in entrepreneurial tactics that apply in teaching situations. Students are encouraged to collaborate with teachers in the field via distance learning technology (Internet, video, synchronous and asynchronous communication). In addition, students have the opportunity to practice entrepreneurial teaching approaches. The pilot/model middle school program currently has a curriculum based on teaching student specific learning styles via the arts, aptitude awareness, careers and entrepreneurship.

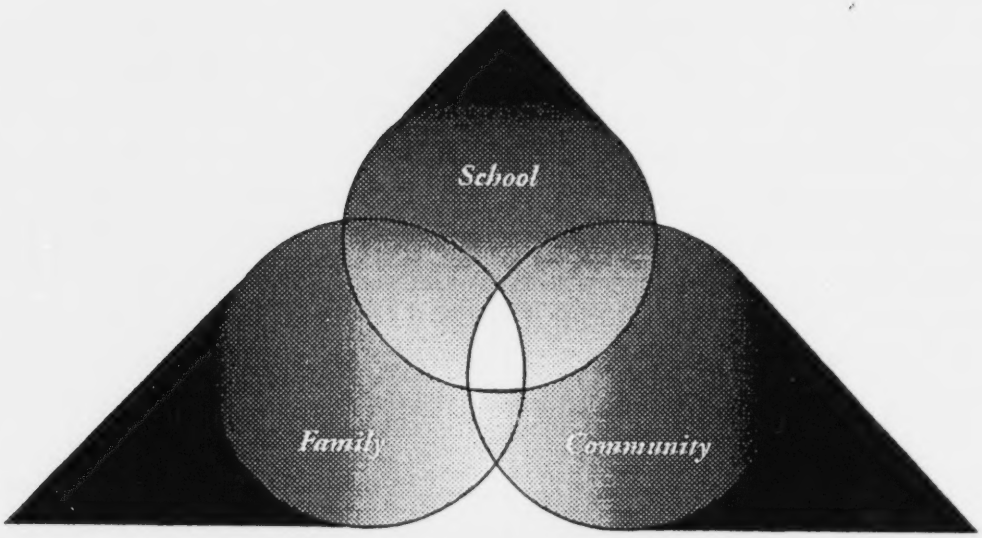
Students are provided the opportunity the facilitate in-service training sessions on entrepreneurial teaching strategies for teachers already working in the public school system. Using distance learning technology, these training session provide a model should others wish to duplicate the entrepreneurial approach to teacher education.

A Summary of Outcomes

Teachers who experience training in business classes that teach entrepreneurial skills and topics will be able to run a classroom like a successful business. Teachers will be able to define their various customer's needs (e.g., students, parents, communities, administrations). Teachers with *Edupreneurial* training will learn how to recognize and nurture their own "passion and motivations" and will be able to nurture corresponding motivators for their students. Teachers with entrepreneurial business training will practice looking at the "big picture" and will recognize relevant and effective interdisciplinary opportunities for teaching. Teachers who are versed at creating a business plan and in developing a "product" will be able to transfer those skills into designing authentic assessment tools, relevant activities and school-to-work programs applicable in the classroom. Teachers with management training will be more effective in working with group dynamics, communication and focusing on the needs of their "customers."

Teachers who have practice in writing a successful business plan will be able to write lesson plans that are more comprehensive and more effectively meet the wide ranging needs of today's student. Entrepreneurs learn how to do more with less in order to be successful in a business. Today's teachers require those same skills. Teachers will be able to write a "business plan" and generate a "class culture" for their teaching and classroom needs. They will share that plan with members of the community, with administration and with parent groups in order to gain necessary funding, volunteers, mentors and other needs. ■

VI. Partnerships for the Promotion of Mental Health



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Chapter 18

The Journey: A Tool for Assisting Kids 'At Risk'

Patricia A. Simmons

David Hamburg, of the Carnegie Corporation, says "the least understood and the most neglected phase of life from conception to senescence is adolescence" (Gilman, 1993, p. 48). It is that period of time that extends from the beginning of sexual maturity to the achievement of independence and adult status. G. Stanley Hall, the first American psychologist to define this growth and development period, called it a period of "strum and drang" or "storm and stress," "where-by emotional turbulence is caused by the tension between biological maturity, and emotional and economic dependence" (Myers, 1989, p. 92; Gilman, 1993, p. 48). This is a period of conflict and confusion, centered on: (a) separation and alienation from parents; (b) attempts to fit in and constantly seeking peer approval; and (c) pressure to achieve.

Combine this with the notion that "*violence is hip* right now, and has become so commercialized and attractive, that it has become part of the developmental norm" (Gilman, 1993, p. 48) for today's teenagers. Then add to the equation abusive families, altered family structures, drug and alcohol problems, an increase in sexual activity, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases, and an increase in the disrespect for authority, use of foul language, self-centered and destructive behaviors, and the decline of self-responsibility for decisions and actions taken and you have established a baseline for the "crises of adolescence" and the potential for the exhibition of "at -risk" behaviors.

Characteristics of Youth At Risk

"At Risk !" What exactly does this mean? For our purposes, the term "at risk" will refer to adolescents who exhibit the following behaviors stemming from the "crises of adolescence": hostility and or aggressiveness; disruptive and or manipulative attitudes; a lack of motivation to set goals or plans toward achievement; an indifference to school or anything else in their lives; a lack of respect for self, others, and rules; high absenteeism and tardiness at school; poor or no study skills/poor or inappropriate communication skills; low or no self-esteem, demonstrating a "why care or do" attitude; and turning to drugs and alcohol as a coping method.

Many of the individuals who display these characteristics are often diagnosed at an early age as being culturally deprived; learning disabled, socially, emotionally, and or mentally dysfunctional, or having ADD/ADHD (a more contemporary recognition),

and according to Mr. Gary McGrath, the former Director of Fox Run Health Care Systems, St. Clairsville, Ohio, "many of these kids today are not dual diagnosed anymore, they are being triple diagnosed." This leaves them to face emotional, physical, psychological, and educational situations that have far greater consequences than teens have ever had to face before. However, many go unrecognized as having specific learning, adjustment, or behavioral problems and they grow into the adolescent period, carrying with them additional frustrations, conflicts, and contradictions that add to the exhibition of these attitudes at home, in school, at the work place, and within the community in general. These kids are surely "at risk" for failure and they share some "common ground" such as: giving in to peer pressure to conform; having absentee parental support; dealing with foster families; being teen aged parents themselves; living with chemically dependent parents; being developmentally delayed (undiagnosed); having poor role models and a lack of a "significant other" for support; experiencing welfare problems.

At some point we need to give them the tools to deal with these crises and assist them in learning to identify their strengths, creative energy, coping methods, self-identity, and rebuild their self-confidence. In effect, we need to help them to discover how they can become the hero of their own lives by taking control of themselves and accepting responsibility for their actions and choices.

When adolescents with these backgrounds and characteristics become involved in the Journey program, a variety of realizations come into awareness that assist the youngster to develop a more self-responsible approach to attaining future goals.

The Journey Program for Youth

The "Journey" is a unique and creative program designed by David Oldfield, M.A. of the Midway Center, Washington, D.C. that helps teenagers to tap their imagination and understand themselves better by drawing upon mythology and symbolic adventure to confront the "necessary crises of adolescence" (Oldfield, 1982).

The two words "adolescence" and "crises" are the main focus of the program and relate to the fact that simply going through the mandatory stages of adolescence is a crisis in and of itself. During this time of development, individuals experience many emotions, including instability, self-doubt, and the fear of the future resulting, at times, in some undesirable behaviors. Adolescence involves engaging in risk-taking behaviors, suffering losses, experiencing defeat, and over-coming anxieties related to themselves, their families, and schools, their peer relationships, and community expectations.

The word "crises," in the Chinese language, according to author Oldfield, is formed by two words "danger" and "opportunity." The danger facing adolescents today is reflected in their conflicts, life decisions, mistakes that they make, and the confusion expressed when they cannot cope or do not understand what is going on around them or within themselves. Opportunity, on the other hand, is reflected in learning from the mistakes made, coping with change, problem solving, and growing and developing in healthy, pro-active ways to achieve life goals. This can be observed in the lessons taught by psychologists, Levinson and Erikson, on life development. Both tell us that as we

attempt to form our self-identity, we develop role confusion between what we were taught and what we are learning (Myers, 1989, pp. 89-107). However, no matter how you look at it, all of this is "necessary" and cannot be avoided, for the process of adolescence is the stage of development that lies between childhood and adulthood, a stage that all individuals must go through—some experiencing more difficulty than others. The Journey offers participants a creative tool with which to be guided through the labyrinth of change and looking at themselves as the hero of their life journey. Participants learn to examine events, experiences, and ideas that shape their lives, as well as identify relevant people in their lives, build a sense of "connectedness" back to parents or significant others, learn to accept responsibility for themselves and their actions, and enhance their awareness of their interpersonal and intrapersonal communications skills by incorporating the basic elements of storytelling, imagination, improvisational games, mask making, creative writing, and group discussion.

Movement Through the Journey:

Stage 1	The Call to Adventure	Dependence vs. Independence
Stage 2	Finding Your Path	Emotional separation from parents vs. Fitting in with peers
Stage 3	Entering the Labyrinth	What you were taught vs.What you are learning
Stage 4	Heart of the Labyrinth	Facing obstacles vs. Overcoming anxiety
Stage 5	Wood Between the Worlds	Balancing: Understanding of yourself vs. Sharing your uniqueness with others
Stage 6	Growth and Development	A never ending journey—Life long learning

The Legacy Program for Adults

In a child development study conducted in San Ramon, California by Eric Schapas, 2,300 parents in 6 schools were asked to come up with 20 characteristics that they thought were important and would like to see in their children. Here are the top 10 (Lickona, 1991, pp. 400-401): ability to exhibit self-confidence; be sensitive to others needs; be responsible for your choices and behaviors; be kind and considerate of others; get good grades in school; exhibit a good attitude and temper; be a hard worker/be cooperative; be able to communicate effectively; be able to solve problems effectively; and be able to make correct decisions.

Our kids need guidance during the adolescent transition period and it is up to the adults in their lives to provide this guidance, helping them to develop the behaviors that, not only parents, but educators and employers want to see exhibited. The "Legacy" portion of the Journey program helps adults in the children's life recollect their memories

of their adolescent passage, promotes a positive and constructive interaction between parent and child, increases their understanding of the other by sharing the "gift of experience," and encourages the types of characteristics listed above.

The Five Stages of the "Legacy" Are:

Stage 1	Heritage	Family, memories, rules, teachings
Stage 2	Independence	Fads, rivals, risks, heroes and shoching the establishment
Stage 3	Challenges	Decisions, changes, triumphs, mistakes
Stage 4	Wonderings	Differences, important people, fears, and turning points
Stage 5	Passages	Wishes, hopes, advice, and sharing

By using both programs, adolescents can be given a helping hand in "growing the conditions of their life through believing in their own worth and abilities, there-by unleashing their capabilities for success" (Taylor, 1993, pp. 29-30).

Youth's Need for Self-responsibility

The Journey process teaches us all about effective problem solving and about the means of developing a self-discipline that results in self-responsibility and autonomy. Authority figures within this scenario, according to Alfie Kohn, "must relinquish their power over adolescents and move in favor of a more democratic approach to addressing the crisis of the 'at risk' population" (Kohn, 1996, p.83). The goal here, says Kohn, "is not to abandon traditional discipline, but to promote self-compliance via use of a democratic process that allows the adolescent input into understanding their needs, rights, experiences, and choices. This process helps to promote compliance and minimize behavior problems" (Kohn, 1996, pp. 81-85). To support what he is saying, Kohn offers the following syllogism :

Major Premise:	Children misbehave when needs are not met.
Minor Premise:	Children (and adults) have a basic need to experience themselves as origins of their own behavior—not as pawns.
Conclusion:	(1) misbehavior diminishes when children feel less controlled;
	(2) children are more respectful when their need to make decisions is respected;
	(3) children will comply/behave when there is no need to struggle for their autonomy. (p. 81)

James Fitzpatrick, former principal and superintendent, Burlington, Vermont would agree. He instituted a set of innovative disciplinary practices that put the burden of responsibility and order on the students. This included giving them a say in determining the rules they would live by and the consequences of their misbehaviors. The results related to incorporating students as an integral part of the communications and decision making process. He discovered (as reported by Kohn, 1996), the following: After the 1st year vandalism dropped from $12,100 per year to $1,200 per year; suspensions were reduced from 90 to 9 per year and in the successive 6 years—there were no suspensions; the dropout rate fell from 7.5 % to 0.5%; and one of 2 alternative schools was closed due to the lack of need.

For these students, self-responsibility, self-respect, and a voice to be heard were the key ingredients that promoted effective problem solving and self-compliance. Involving kids in the Journey program helps them to "learn by doing" through participation in a guided teen forum that allows them a voice to be heard, and helps them develop the pro-active skills that are necessary for a more confident and autonomous self.

Conclusion

How can we as adults help youth navigate the risky journey through adolescence? This question is best answered by the following practical laws, which summarize the application of the Journey and Legacy programs:

Simmons' Journey Laws

Law 1	Be a good role model for adolescents by demonstrating the behaviors that you expect of them (listen, trust, show respect, build confidence, etc.).
Law 2	Assist your students in developing dialogue with each other and help them to recognize differences in thinking, actions, and responses, and develop appropriate problem solving strategies.
Law 3	Encourage cross generational group interaction by implementing the "Legacy" and conducting mixed generation groups.
Law 4	Allow for flexibility in self-investigation in group discussions and offer a creative outlet for exploring personal experiences.
Law 5	Assist your students in developing a self-investigative process by: • using open ended questions • brainstorm options/alternatives/opportunities • reinforcing positive statements • helping them define feelings, emotions, and reactions • using examples from History, Psychology, Sociology, and Literature for critical and analytical skills building
Law 6	Help your students focus on positive problem solving to correct the

negatives, and encourage cross-grade level participation—help them to grow and develop their potential.

Follow these laws and remember this quote from the Talmud: "Every blade of grass has an angel that bends over it and whispers, grow! Grow!" As an adult working with kids today, be an angel—help our kids and families to grow! ■

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Chapter 19

Effects of Ego Involvement and Verbal Persuasion Type On Self-efficacy and Commitment among Adolescents in a Therapeutic Recreation Setting

John Kablach

Many investigators have studied factors associated with depression and related variables among adolescent youth. These investigations include studies of attribution styles and learned helplessness (Seligman, Abramson, Semmel, & Baeyer, 1979); self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977a, 1977b, 1982, 1986a, 1986b; Schunk, 1981, 1986a, 1986b); substance abuse and suicidal behavior (Brent, Kolko, Allan, & Brown, 1990; Crumley, 1990; King, Raskin, Gdowski, Butkus, & Opipari, 1989; Lester & Gatto, 1989; Spirito, Hart, Overholser, & Halverson, 1990); moods, single-parent homes, cigarette smoking (Covey & Tam, 1990); sex differences (Allgood-Merten, Lewinsohn, & Hops, 1990), and control related cognition (So-Kum & Critelli, 1990; Weisz, Stevens, Curry, Cohen, Craighead, Burlingame, Smith, Weiss, Parmelee, 1989).

Review of these studies reveals a number of factors that seem to be common to many problems associated with depressed adolescents. Among these are lack of self-efficacy and commitment as expressed in feelings of meaningless, uncertainty, substance abuse, and helplessness. Individuals who are committed to a particular endeavor may build self-efficacy by attributing successes they experience in the endeavor to their personal efficacy (Bandura, 1986b).

A substantial body of research supports the position that ego involvement and carefully constructed verbal persuasion messages may be useful factors in promoting self-efficacy attributions (Bandura, 1977a, 1982, 1986a, 1986b; Barrell, Chamberlain, Evans, Holt, & Mackean, 1989; Coladarci, 1992; Evans & Tribble, 1986; McIntyre, 1992; Rosenberg, 1979; Schunk, 1981, 1983a, 1984a, 1986a; Schunk & Cox, 1986a; Siegenthaler & Lam, 1992; Yair, 1990, 1992).

Individuals who lack ego involvement and who seldom received positive affirmation have limited opportunity to affirm beliefs about their personal efficacy. This lack of opportunity precludes the existence of the necessary context for attributions that enhance self-esteem and combat helpless depression (e.g., Schunk, 1984a, 1984b; Sedek, Kofta,

& Tyszka, 1993; Seligman et al., 1979; Skaalvik, 1990; Thoresen & Eagleston, 1983). Existing theory and research provide a limited degree of understanding of conditions related to ego involvement, verbal persuasion, and their effect on self-efficacy and commitment that leads to a reduction in self-destructive social, emotional, and physical behavior among depressed adolescents.

One approach to study existing theory related to ego involvement and verbal persuasion is the use of carefully constructed messages (Bandura, 1986a; Sandelands, Brockner, & Glynn, 1988). For example, Sandelands et al. (1988) successfully manipulated students' ego involvements by providing them with specific information regarding a unique task. Schunk (1984a, 1984b) provided feedback messages such as, "you're good at this" or "you've been working hard," to determine how sequencing of ability and effort attribution feedback influences children's attributions for task success, self-efficacy, and skillful performance. The benefits to individuals who are exposed to such persuasion messages are many. Typically, they perform tasks more effectively, persist in tasks longer, report greater achievement and pride in the task along with higher levels of aspirations, and higher levels of academic self-concept (Craven, Marsh, & Debus, 1991).

Ellis, Maughan-Pritchett, and Ruddell (1993) examined the effects of attribution based verbal persuasion on self-efficacy among depressed adolescents and demonstrated convincingly that verbal persuasion messages that promote internal attributions for success have a powerful effect on self-efficacy judgments and performance accomplishments.

Appropriate social interventions may follow from extending the present knowledge base. Interventions that would seem to be particularly beneficial include those techniques that increase ego involvement and self-efficacy. The benefit of an enhanced self-efficacy through such messages according to Bandura (1986a), is that "self-efficacy tends to generalize to other situations, especially those in which performance has been self-debilitated by preoccupation with personal inadequacies" (p. 399).

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the effect of ego involvement and verbal persuasion type on self-efficacy and commitment among depressed adolescents involved in a therapeutic recreation activity. It is hypothesized that a significant interaction effect will exist between verbal persuasion and ego involvement with respect to self-efficacy and commitment. Research participants exposed to high ego involvement and ability verbal persuasion type might be expected to score higher on the outcome measures, as compared to the other three treatment conditions.

Methods

Subjects

Sixty adolescent youth diagnosed with depression according to the DSM IV criteria (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) served as research participants. Participants ranged from 12 to 18 years. Research participants were selected from three data collection sites in the Salt Lake City, Utah area.

Instrumentation

Self-efficacy level was measured by asking research participants to indicate whether or not they could complete each of the game's levels of difficulty at a high skill level accomplishment. For example, they were asked, "If you play at the beginner level, will you be able to move the controls quickly enough?" (coded 0 = no, 1 = yes), and "If you play at the next and more advanced level, will you be able to move the controls quickly enough?" An individual's self-efficacy level score was represented by adding the numbers of "yes" responses.

Self-efficacy strength was measured by asking research participants to rate, on a 7-point scale (1 = not at all sure; 7 = very sure), how sure they were of their ability to perform each behavior. Each rating was weighted by a score of +1 if the research participant indicated that he or she could successfully perform a stated behavior and a -1 if he or she could not perform successfully. For example, a score of +7 for a particular item would indicate that the research participant felt very sure that he or she could successfully perform the behavior requested. The weighted scores were summed across all items to create an overall index of self-efficacy strength.

Commitment level measured two types of commitment, *structural* and *personal* (Yair, 1990). Structural commitment infers external constraints that may make it difficult to discontinue the task whereas personal commitment infers an internal constraint and denotes a sense of determination to continue on task, regardless of factors that may interfere with task continuance or completion.

Persistence was measured by recording participant's engagement time on task (Ellis et al., 1993; Schunk, 1981), and by inviting research participants to continue to play the game on their own with a maximum time limit set at 20 minutes. This additional engagement time period was recorded. Game *performance*, operationalized through game score, was recorded after completion of the video game.

Depression may play a part in the way in which the responses are received and interpreted by the research participants. To account for potential variances due to depression level difference, Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) scores were collected and used as a covariate. Global Assessment of Functioning scores, consider psychological, social, and occupational functioning on a hypothetical continuum of mental health-illness (DSM IV, 1994).

Procedure

A fully crossed independent groups factorial design was used. Factors in the design were verbal persuasion type (ability vs. effort) and ego involvement (high vs. low). A computer game played on a television set was used as the context for delivery of the experimental treatment.

Ego Involvement. Research participants' ego involvement was manipulated by a description of the task they were to perform. This description was also read aloud by the researcher to the participant prior to playing the video game. One half of the research participants were informed that their task performance was very revealing of their

personality and aptitude levels (high-involvement condition), and the remaining research participants were informed that their task performance was nonrevealing of themselves (low-involvement condition).

Verbal Persuasion Messages. The verbal persuasion type ability and effort attribution conditions were operationalized through the use of verbal messages designed to promote either an internal stable or effort attribution (see Table 1). Levels of the verbal persuasion type variable were (a) persuasion designed to promote ability attributions (Brown & Siegel, 1988; Ellis et al., 1993; Schunk, 1984b; Schunk & Cox, 1986b), and (b) persuasion designed to promote effort attributions (Iso-Ahola, 1977; LaNoue & Curtis, 1985; Schunk, 1983a, 1983b, 1984a, 1984b). These messages were delivered to the research participants during game play.

The video game used in this study was a new game on the market. Its title is *BUG*, by SEGA Saturn. This game was chosen for several reasons. Research participants were not familiar with the game. It had a nonthreatening game strategy and contained no offensive visual or verbal compromises which parents or research participants would judge be offensive. Games of this nature require the player to manipulate a joystick and control movement of an object that represents them in the game. A key strategy as the participant played the game was to stay "alive," move along the game levels as far as possible (each level progression becomes increasingly difficult), and score as many points as possible before one of several events occurs—game time ends, self-destruction occurs, or the ultimate end is achieved.

A maximum time limit of 20 minutes was imposed. Research participants were not informed of this time limitation until the 20-minute time period had been exhausted. They were then asked to discontinue game play. To control for participant prior involvement with the computer game and any previous experience with computer games in general, random assignment was used to assign research participants to each of the four treatment conditions (Kirk, 1982).

Table 1
Attribution Messages

Ability Condition	Effort Condition
You are good at this!	You are playing really hard!
You know how to use great game strategy!	You are really playing hard at this game!
You have great reaction!	You are working really hard at this!
You are a pro!	Great effort!
You have great reflexes!	

Manipulation Check

Manipulation checks were used to verify that research participants were aware of the experimental manipulation. Three such manipulation checks were placed in the design of this study, (a) one for ego involvement, (b) one for verbal persuasion type, and (c) one for threats to internal validity. Ego involvement was checked by asking research participants to recall the document introduced to them during the introduction of the study and prior to start of the computer game. Specifically, they were asked if it was important for them to get a high score. The statement was scored on a 7-point Likert scale. Verbal persuasion manipulation was checked by asking research participants if they remembered the verbal statements made to them by the researcher during the implementation of the experiment. They were also asked if they could list any of these statements on the questionnaires at the end of the session with the following statement: "Please list any of these statements that you remember in the space provided below."

Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed through multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA). Factors in the design were ego-involvement (high vs. low) and verbal persuasion type (effort vs. ability). It was hypothesized that a significant interaction effect would exist between verbal persuasion and ego involvement with respect to self efficacy measures, commitment, persistence, and game score.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics

	N of Items	Mean	Std. Dev.	Scale Alpha
SE Level	8	7.18	1.08	.51[b]
SE Strength	8	34.08	14.32	.76
OU Level	15	10.37	3.18	.54[c]
OU Strength	15	62.43	20.43	.67
Commitment	27	61.12	15.30	.91
Persistence	60[a]	17.58	5.98	—
Game Score	60[a]	118.55	52.63	—
GAF	60[a]	40.40	10.92	—

Note. SE = Self-efficacy; OU = Outcome; GAF = Global Assessment of Functioning.
[a]60 = number of research participants. [b].5108 based upon 6 items. [c].54 based upon 12 items.

Table 3
Correlation Among Dependent Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 SE Level	1.00						
2 SE Strength	.854*	1.00					
3 Outcome Level	.488*	.488*	1.00				
4 Outcome Strength	.526*	.654*	.892*	1.00			
5 Commitment	.177	.048	.164	.145	1.00		
6 Persistence	.117	.255*	.041	.179	-.117	1.00	
7 Game Score	.177	.325*	.105	.237	-.117	.712*	1.00

Note. SE = Self-efficacy.
* = $p < .05$.

Table 4
Adjusted Group Means

	Cell Means				Marginal Means			
PT	Ability	Effort	Ability	Effort	PT		EIT	
EIT	High	High	Low	Low	Ability	Effort	High	Low
SE Level	7.15	7.12	6.92	7.55	7.03	7.34	7.13	7.23
SE Strength	33.46	30.48	33.05	39.33	33.26	34.90	31.97	36.20
Outcome Level[b]	12.87	12.67	12.73	12.47	12.80	12.57	12.76	12.60
Outcome Strength	65.15	59.71	63.19	61.68	64.17	60.69	62.43	62.44
Commit-ment	64.94	59.87	60.78	58.87	62.86	59.37	62.41	59.83
Persis-tence	18.05	16.65	17.38	18.25	17.72	17.45	17.35	17.82
Game Score	111.38	98.98	118.85	133.98	115.12	121.98	110.68	126.42

Note. PT = Persuasion Type; EIT = Ego Involvement Type; SE = Self-efficacy.
[a]SE Level = based upon 8 items; [b]Outcome Level = based upon 12 items.

Table 5
MANCOVA Results

Effect	Wilks Lambda	*F*	Hypoth. *DF*	Error *DF*	*p*	Effect Size
GAF	.795	1.80	7	49	.108	.205
EIT	.910	.688	7	49	.681	.090
PT	.904	.746	7	49	.634	.096
EIT by PT	.953	.343	7	49	.930	.047

Univariate Strength of Relationships

	EIT		PT		EIT by PT	
	Eta^2	Power	*Eta*^{2}	Power	*Eta*^{2}	Power
SE Level	.002	.051	.021	.184	.023	.201
SE Strength	.023	.197	.004	.052	.027	.225
Outcome Level	.003	.052	.005	.048	.001	.036
Outcome Strength	.000	.000	.007	.073	.002	.051
Commitment	.009	.104	.016	.168	.003	.052
Persistence	.002	.049	.001	.040	.009	.131
Game Score	.024	.208	.005	.048	.007	.060

Note. GAF = Global Assessment of Functioning; EIT = Ego Involvement Type; PT = Persuasion Type; SE = Self-efficacy.

Results

Descriptive Statistics. A summary of descriptive statistics is presented in Table 2. Of particular interest in the table are the alpha reliability estimates of the instruments used to measure the dependent variables. In addition, among the descriptive statistics that were of particular interest was the GAF score mean of 40.40. A mean of that level indicates that the members of the sample had a high level of dysfunction, indicative of depression levels. Correlations among the dependent variables were also calculated. Results of these analyses are presented in Table 3.

Hypothesis Tests. Results from this study indicated that (a) there were no significant interaction or main effects; (b) the manipulation check for ego involvement was not successful; (c) the manipulation check for verbal persuasion demonstrated that the research participants were aware of comments being made to them by the researcher during experimentation. A significant difference existed between ability and effort group members in terms of their ability to recall and list these verbal persuasion messages; and finally, (d) importance as a moderator variable, revealed no significant interaction effects on self-efficacy.

Adjusted group means are shown in Table 4. A review of Table 4, reveals that the effort/low ego involvement group scored .63 units higher than the ability/low ego involvement group, and higher than the ability/effort high ego involvement groups.

This trend was also revealed in the self-efficacy strength, persistence, and game score variables. Expected higher score trends were found in outcome level, outcome strength, and commitment, but were not significant.

Results of the multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) are presented in Table 5. As can be seen by a review of that table, the hypothesized interaction effect was not significant ($F_{1,49} = .343$, $p = .930$). Eta squared values and power estimates revealed that relationships between the predictor and criterion variables were very weak. Eta squared values ranged from <.001 to .027 and power estimates ranged from .036 to .225. Main effects were also not significant. For ego involvement, the multivariate F was .688 (p =.681) and for verbal persuasion type, the F ratio was .746 (p = .634).

Discussion

This study involved the proposition that a significant interaction effect would exist between verbal persuasion and ego involvement with respect to self-efficacy and commitment. Our original hypothesis was not supported. However, of significance, was the finding that research participants in the ability persuasion group remembered more relevant comments than research participants in the effort group.

Ego involvement manipulation of research participants by Sandelands et al. (1988) was successful. In their study, they manipulated research participants' (business administration students) egos and found a significant task information by ego involvement interaction effect as hypothesized. The findings of the present study do not support that egos of depressed adolescents can be manipulated as easy. Therefore, it appears that the intricacies in the manipulation of a depressed adolescent population group are much more complex than previous research demonstrated and theory would suggest.

Beatty et al. (1988) defined ego involvement as related to the importance to the individual and to the individual's self-concept, values, and ego. Closely related to ego involvement is commitment. It is defined as an emotional or psychological attachment. The manipulation can be produced by statements aimed at creating greater personal relevancy to the research participant. While the attempt to manipulate ego involvement levels was not statistically successful, it did produce results in the desired direction.

Because importance is linked to ego involvement in the literature (Greenwald, 1982; LaNoue & Curtis, 1985; Sandelands et al., 1988; Selin & Howard, 1988), the effects of importance were examined through an exploratory analysis. The results of this analysis revealed no significant interaction paths among the importance variables on the latent variable self-efficacy. This was due to the inability to manipulate the minds of the research participants on the importance of either scoring high or not scoring high. Unlike the Sandelands et al. (1988) study in which ego involvement was successfully manipulated, research participants in this present study were dealt with *extreme* caution. Their depressed states and all the abuse contained in their fragile lives leading to their participation in this present study, resulted in the researcher's belief that any manipulation of the research participants must be done with *all possible care*,

resulting in a *no harm condition*, and with *complete honesty*. This level of concern and care essentially reduced the capability of the researcher to use methods of manipulation which may have produced the desired significant effects between the groups.

The use of verbal persuasion type messages, ability and effort, were not statistically significant. However, as determined by the nonsignificant interaction effect, the present research does support the previous research of Ellis et al. (1993).

Limitations of Study

Questions remain regarding the reliability of the instruments used. In the previous study using these instruments (Ellis et al., 1993), high alpha reliabilities were reported; yet, marginal levels were achieved in this present study working with a very similar population group.

The research participants selected were experienced players of video games in general, yet they had no previous experience playing on the game selected for this research study. Perhaps this general video game playing predetermination of ones' ability to play video games, regardless of a researcher's comments, may have been a factor in producing little change or manipulation in the participant's mind. Therefore, generalizability to other groups may produce different results, if this factor is not some how controlled.

Perhaps another limiting factor was related to the research participants' depression levels in general. While depression, as determined by the Global Assessment of Functioning (GAF) scores was used as a covariate, it none the less may have been a contributing factor toward the ability to manipulate depressed adolescents. Since no GAF levels were available from the previous studies, it was not possible to determine if depression levels were affecting the results attained in this study.

Two other specific factors limit the generalization of the results of this study. They are the institutionalized status of the research participants and the role or relationship of the person implementing the experimental manipulation. The first, institutionalized status may be either day or residential treatment. Participants in this study were primarily from a mix of day and residential treatment programs. To infer differences among groups in only day treatment or only residential treatment settings would go beyond the scope of this study. Several conclusions may be drawn from this. Residential treatment versus day treatment, period of time in treatment setting, and number of treatment programs participated in may be important factors to consider when generalizing this study to other treatment settings and populations.

Second, the role or relationship of the person implementing the experimental manipulation may influence the outcome. In this study, no relationship was established between the researcher and the research participants prior to experimental manipulation. However, differences may occur when the experimenter has a preestablished relationship with the research participants. In the Sandelands et al. (1988) study, the research manipulations were delivered from representatives of the department; they were related to business endeavors and business type values. The research participants in their study

may have been placed in an experiment in which they desired to please the researchers. Therefore, the role or relationship of the researcher as it relates to the research participants, may affect the perceived importance or value of scoring high or not scoring high.

Finally, the degree of the importance of the activity to the research participant was a limiting factor. In this study, analysis revealed no statistical significance of the importance variable. Therefore, the concept of importance, limited this study to those participants who held the belief that it was not important to score high when playing the video game.

Future Research

Several research directions for the future when studying depressed adolescents are apparent. Further refinement of instrumentation needs to continue. Further examination of the instruments is necessary to determine why reliability estimates of the self-efficacy and outcome judgment instruments used in this study were different from the previous study of Ellis et al. (1993).

In this study, an attempt was made to construct and test the impact of a number of very important variables associated with treatment programs with depressed adolescents. Ego involvement, verbal persuasion types, and how they impact self-efficacy and commitment are important variables to consider when working with depressed adolescents. For example, why conduct an Alcoholics Anonymous program when the depressed adolescent is not committed to self-improvement? Therefore, further examination of ego involvement and its impact on outcome variables, how to manipulate them, and their relationship to one another needs to be continued.

Sex might make a difference when studying depressed adolescents. As in the study conducted by LaNoue and Curtis (1985), the presence of either males or females made a difference in how information was received by the research participants.

Further investigation and research on effort attributions need to continue. More research should be placed on exploring the exact nature of effort attribution and how it is related to ego involvement. Effort attribution in the presence of a low ego involvement condition among depressed adolescents may prove to be a more powerful therapeutic tool than other methods if persistence and scoring high are goals of the program.

The significant difference in the research participants' abilities to recall messages made to them needs further exploration. How important is the finding that ability oriented internal persuasion messages are recalled and effort messages were not? How does this recall ability impact the success of the client in therapeutic type intervention program? Is recall of these messages an important factor in the rehabilitation of depressed adolescents? How exact does this recall have to be? These areas need further examination to determine their impact on the successful outcome of programs offered to depressed adolescents.

Finally, the roles of the person operationalizing the study may be an important

variable to consider in future studies. For example, in the Ellis et al. (1993) study, the researcher implementing the experimental conditions was the recreation therapist on site. This person had day to day contact with the research participants. A preestablished relationship versus a newly established relationship when attempting to perform manipulations of this nature may influence the outcome. Future research studies may investigate the difference between preestablished relationships and newly established relationships of the experimenter in working with depressed adolescents.

The results of this study generally support previous research findings that verbal persuasion messages are important therapeutic tools in the treatment of depressed adolescents and other groups as well. Based upon this previous line of research, recreation therapists may continue with confidence to use the concept of verbal persuasion theory and know that it is having a positive effect on their client's self-efficacy. ■

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Chapter 20

The Hidden Shame of the Child Protective Services System: Institutional Child Abuse and Neglect

Lisa J. Felix and Mary Ann Rosenbauer

Traditionally, child welfare caseworkers view themselves as rescuers of children. They attempt to prevent children from further abuse or neglect by arranging a myriad of services for the family which are designed to teach a parent alternate parenting and coping skills. However, when the abuse is egregious or previous attempts to ameliorate the situation have proven unsuccessful, the child welfare caseworker will take the child into custody and place him/her in a substitute care placement. The caseworker believes that the child is now free from further abuse; however, that belief may be inaccurate.

Policies for agency response to child mistreatment reports in foster care have long been inadequate, incomplete, or non-existent (Carbino, 1992). Research has indicated that foster homes are involved in (approximately) 1 percent of the national abuse reports (Daro & McCurdy, 1991). However, any time a child is harmed by the very system that was designed to protect the child, this is one time to many. The Department of Children and Families in Orlando, Florida (District 7) has attempted to create a system to respond to these allegations of abuse and neglect that protects children in custody and is responsive to the needs of substitute care providers.

Historical Perspective

In 1988, the agency reviewed its procedures for investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect in settings other than the child's natural home. In Florida, institutional abuse investigations require an immediate notification to law enforcement and the state attorney regardless of the allegation. Often caseworkers are not familiar with these special requirements in the statute because most other cases only required notification if evidence of abuse was found. Because of these different reporting requirements, the agency decided to create a specialized investigative unit that would be responsible for investigating the institutional abuse allegations.

The unit was conceived as being able to provide a consistent approach to institutional abuse investigations. It was determined that by having a special group of

core investigators, expertise would develop. Additional rationale for this specialized unit was to allow foster parents to become familiar and less threatened by the four investigators. Research has indicated that foster families are more likely to be reported for child abuse and neglect (Carbino, 1992). It was believed that this familiarity and knowledge of the process would make the investigation less threatening.

Florida Statute 415.503(10) defines an institutional child abuse or neglect as "situations of known or suspected child abuse or neglect in which the person allegedly perpetrating the child abuse or neglect is an employee of a private school, public or private day care center, residential home, institution, facility, or agency or any other person responsible for the child's care." The investigative steps delineated in the statute are as follows: (a) Immediate notification to law enforcement, the state attorney, and the licensing agency, for the purpose of conducting a joint investigation; (b) Immediate on site response to the institution; (c) Determination of the risk to the child and all other children at the facility.

In reviewing the mandatory statutory requirements, the process can be very intimidating for a foster parent or any other licensed child care provider. The immediate notification to law enforcement can result in several police cars being dispatched to a foster home merely because it was a slow crime night. The foster parent can quickly become defensive and embarrassed by the attention brought to their home and neighborhood. Continuing education of both law enforcement and the foster parents is critical. While it is imperative that all the facts be gathered in the investigation, there is no need for a "rush to judgment." The investigator can often help to minimize the trauma by advising law enforcement that the notification is being made pursuant to statutory requirements and that it is unknown whether there is any validity to the allegations. Sensitivity to everyone in the investigative process results in better factual information gathering, appropriate safeguarding of the child, and a better understanding of the child welfare system by foster parents.

The education of foster parents and other child care providers about the institutional abuse investigative process begins during their initial training. It is repeated at various training sessions or meetings. Either the supervisor of the unit or the individual investigators will prepare a presentation about the investigative process which explains, personalizes, and makes the process less intimidating. This approach increases the chance for more objective responses by all parties (Carbino, 1992).

One of the distinct advantages of having a small core group of investigators is that it allows for trend analysis and provides an opportunity for the agency to become proactive. Events which have not yet elevated themselves to the level of meeting the statutory definition of abuse or neglect, can be seen as potential risk situations to children. Prescriptive measures can be taken to prevent abuse. A statistical analysis of the abuse and neglect reports received by the specialized unit indicates that there is a higher degree of validity to referrals when the community has expressed concerns about a substitute care placement. Although the concerns are not abusive at this time, they have the potential for rising to the level of an abusive situation. The analysis also indicates

that males are more likely to be physically abused in institutional settings, whereas females are more likely to be abused in home settings. Reports are more likely to be made in an institutional setting when a caregiver is in a one-on-one situation with a child. Institutional settings can assist in providing safer environments for children by responding to concerns that are expressed, providing additional training to their staff, and establishing clear policies on interactions with children.

Florida has taken several steps that are designed to improve the quality of care that a child receives while in state custody. The first step is referred to as the Foster Care Exit Interview. Every child aged five years or older, who has resided in a placement for thirty days or longer, is interviewed when they leave their placement. The interview must occur within five days of the child leaving the placement and is always conducted at a location that is away from the placement. The child is queried about the meals eaten, the relationship with the former substitute caregiver, methods of discipline received, and their overall impression with the placement. The child's identity is kept confidential and the results are placed in the foster parent's licensing file. Corrective action with the foster home may be initiated as a result of the exit interview responses.

An additional proactive measure that was adopted by the agency is the Foster Care Referral. Although these are not abuse reports, the reporting of concerns and the case documentation requirements are similar to an abuse report. Anyone who has a concern about a child in a substitute care placement can all the toll free Hotline number and report a concern. In District 7, these referrals are also handled by the Institutional Abuse Unit. This has further enhanced the unit's ability to address concerns about a substitute care placement before an incident of abuse or neglect occurs.

How to Establish a Unit

If a child protective agency is considering developing a specialized investigative unit, it is critical that the administration totally support this unit. Administration must be able to support investigative findings, even if the findings result in the closure of a placement that the agency has licensed. The issue of concern about agency liability cannot cloud an investigation. Child protection can and should always be in the forefront. By adapting procedures such as the Foster Care Exit Interview and the Foster Care Referral an agency can limit its liability by preventing abuse from occurring.

The staffing of the unit is also another critical element. An agency should look for staff that are experienced and knowledgeable about the entire agency and the various functions of each programmatic area. Unless the staff can see how the whole picture fits together, they will be ineffective investigators. The staff should also be very non-threatening in their demeanor. In these cases, the alleged perpetrators are always part of the helping child welfare system. The receipt of an abuse report will call into question their ability to properly care for a child and can be a very damaging process if not handled correctly. By presenting themselves with a non-threatening demeanor, the investigator can help to reassure a very shaken caregiver. They will also find that information will be more free flowing and they will be better able to make good

judgments if the alleged perpetrator is more at ease.

The unit should be limited to investigating institutional abuse cases only. This allows the staff to become familiar with the various substitute care placements in the area and for staff in those placements to become familiar with the investigators. Patterns become easily discernible. Information on facility practices and procedures is often known by the unit before an investigation begins making it easier to spot potential problems before they become abuse. Unfortunately, it also becomes much easier to determine if an employee or substitute care parent has crossed the line and abused or neglected a child.

The supervisor of the unit is the critical link in the entire process. The supervisor must have excellent organizational skills. The supervisor will often be the first person in the agency to determine if children will need to be removed or additional steps need to be taken to close the placement. He/she must also be aware of less intrusive alternatives, which can help to ameliorate the situation.

How to Make the Unit Effective

Fundamental to the establishment of a specialized unit is the development of an organizational culture which encourages open communication, consensus building, decisions to be made, accountability, and honesty.

To begin the process of open communication with staff, the employees need to be able to express their viewpoint in an accepting arena, whether or not their views differ from the general consensus. They need to know that it is permissible to have their views differ from others. The tone for this environment is established by the administration of the agency. Administration must encourage open participation in discussion and be willing to acknowledge that past practices may not continue to be acceptable. Open communication must include the sharing of all pertinent information from the administration to the staff and from the staff to administration.

Consensus building is another critical element for an effective specialized unit. The parties need to agree to disagree. Since it is important for the agency to maintain common goals and objectives; it is imperative that consensus occur. All parties need to believe that they have participated in the decision making process.

Decisions must be made and action must occur. There can be a tendency to over analyze issues rather than make a decision for necessary action. There may also be an unwillingness to commit to a decision that is unpleasant. The agency must always remember that child protection is the reason for their existence. Decisions should not be prolonged or delayed due to uncertainty nor should decision making be swift. Decisions should be well grounded in acceptable child welfare practices.

Involvement in the decision making process results in accountability. It must be clearly stated who is to complete which tasks. Every participant's role must be plainly defined and expectations set. There may be times when roles are merged and a participant may be assigned a task that typically does not fall under their normal scope of responsibility. If open communication and consensus building have occurred, staff are

more likely to accept an atypical assignment as a challenge rather than as a burden.

Honesty is always the best policy. Inappropriate decisions may be made if based on inaccurate assumptions. The gathering and sharing of information must be completely truthful at all times. Staff should not be fearful that their investigations have revealed a flaw within the agency.

Another characteristic of an effective specialized unit is the practice of regularly scheduled meetings to discuss open investigations. These meetings must include all relevant personnel such as counselors familiar with the institution, licensing representatives, contract managers, program specialists and key administrators. It is best to have a consistent date and time for this type of staffing. Attendance tends to be better when all parties involved know in advance when the meetings will be held. It is imperative that minutes of the staffing be taken and then distributed to all parties as quickly as possible. Any revisions should be made in a timely manner and the updated minutes disseminated quickly. The minutes should clearly document assigned tasks. The next staffing must address task completion of the previous meeting.

As previously noted, in Florida, law enforcement must be notified on every institutional abuse investigation. The statutory requirement provides the additional benefit of an outside point of view when social services has the responsibility to investigate itself. Children in foster care have a right to safe keeping (Kearse, 1996). Depending on your area you may have to interact with several law enforcement agencies. Key administrators must meet with key law enforcement officials to develop a protocol for institutional child abuse investigations. Opportunities exist for cross training of both agency staff and law enforcement staff, resulting in an improved response to child abuse investigations. If protocols cannot be developed, at the very least, there should be an established rapport with the detectives assigned to child abuse cases.

Finally, an effective unit is characterized by an administration which is supportive of the investigative staff. A unique consequence of conducting institutional abuse investigations is that an alleged perpetrator or agency staff who refuses to believe the allegations, will utilize their positions to call attention to the investigative process itself. If an agency is not careful, the focus of the investigation can turn to the investigative process itself rather than the reason for the investigation. In essence, the investigator is constantly subjected to agency scrutiny. This can impact the unit's morale and it is important that these factors be recognized and addressed.

Conclusion

Children removed from abusive situations in their homes have the right to be protected while in state custody. Although research has indicated that the number of reports of abuse in institutions and foster homes is small, the seriousness of this small amount cannot be overstated. Special factors such as minimizing trauma to foster children and the substitute care provider, while balancing liability issues for the agency, must be considered when conducting institutional child abuse investigations. State agencies and institutional settings can assist in providing safer environments for children by

responding to concerns that are expressed. An agency that has the responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse and neglect in substitute care placements must develop clear policies and procedures for the investigative process and assure that any recommended corrective action occurs. This paper has attempted to provide a framework for those policies. ■

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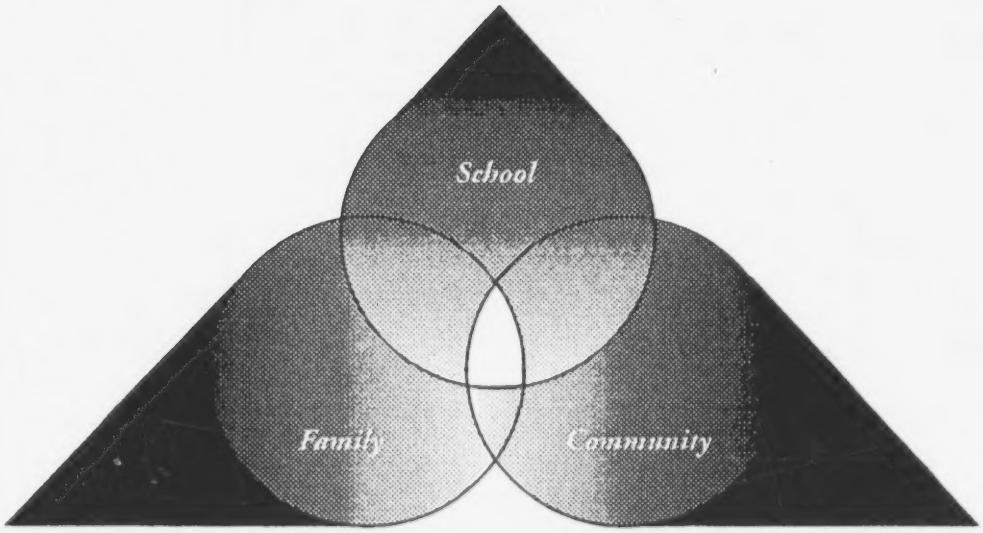
VII. Partnerships for Juvenile Delinquency Intervention



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Chapter 21

Recreation as an Intervention Tool in Juvenile Detention Centers

Clinton D. Longacre

The dedicated youth detention center workers who are helping incarcerated young people in juvenile detention centers across this nation deserve all the accolades that may come their way. Their job is tough and they deserve all the help that can be provided them. Certainly in this process recreation professionals are positioned to offer a unique approach to more effective interaction between the detention center staff and the young people. The attributes of both professions lend to the idea of cooperative efforts to battle the negative factors amalgamated with this special population. Each profession has its own educational, philosophical, and tactical accessions for aiding chronic delinquents.

A chronic delinquent is defined as having committed status crimes (i.e., misdemeanors or felonies such as theft, aggravated assault, rape), which have required incarceration. They are habitual or repeat offenders. These young people are hard-core, self-acknowledged offenders or substance abusers (Schultz, Crompton, & Witt, 1995). Collaboration of the two disciplines can provide a powerful change for the young people and for the detention center staff working with them.

A Word About Rules for Young People Today

Young people today are looking for structure. They are looking for that line which they are not supposed to step over. If that line is not present, trouble is not far behind. Recently, while working with some incarcerated young people, a young man shared the fact that he felt being incarcerated was probably a lucky break for him. His reason was that it placed him in a structured situation where he had to follow rules.

In working with teens the one constant which is observable is that teens want parameters. Another factor which is absolutely imperative, is that rules and conduct expectations must be clear and they must be respected and followed by the youth. Rules for conduct at the detention centers are established by the staff. Recreation activities provide the avenue for teaching the importance of rules and the need to follow them; through recreation programs this structure can be provided in a much more relaxed atmosphere. Recreation provides the vehicle for teaching trust, the importance of following rules, and how to accept a helping hand.

Recreation's Role as an Intervention Tool

Recreation activities have an innate draw to young people in general, including incarcerated youth, therefore offering a conveyance for appraising and affecting positive conduct. Recreation is the hook for a deeper involvement between the staff and the youth with whom they work (Witt & Crompton, 1996); it provides a safe psychological and social environment for youth to interact with staff and vice versa. Recreation activities that are designed to build trust will assist in getting the communication process established through a congenial and non-threatening setting. The theory being proposed is for recreation programming to be used as an important intervention tool of the general juvenile justice delivery system. The recreation program can become an element of the comprehensive program effort in juvenile detention centers. Recreation activities are able to address developmental needs of the young people, such as interaction, trust, cooperation, and communication. The establishment or amplification of these needs can become the program goals. The paramount result of recreational activity strategies is to provide young people with the ability and demeanor that will allow them to deal with and adapt to the strain and conditions of their daily world (McMillan & Reed, 1994).

The composition and framework of these activities need to be clear and emphatically expressed. Each activity should have clearly stated performance objectives. These objectives need to lucidly designate the conduct to be exhibited and have quantifiable standards for measuring goal accomplishment. Numerous activities can be developed to meet goal accomplishments. The key is to establish performance objectives for each activity. The use of a challenge course, with both juveniles and staff participating will be used to illustrate this point. The goal is to establish better juvenile-staff interaction. The performance objective for this activity may be for 70% of the juveniles to demonstrate more trust, and better cooperation and communication with staff members. This performance objective refers to the goal of better juvenile-staff interaction.

Resource Utilization Through Cooperative Efforts

A very exciting aspect of cooperative effort is the fact that needed resources are in place. No large sums of money need to be spent on human or physical resources to make this concept a reality. Prior to identifying required resources, a survey should be taken to establish the needs, concerns, and desires of the youth detention center staff and of the incarcerated youth. Once these factors have been established, the next step is to identify the human, physical, financial, and information resources available inside or outside the institution to meet the needs, concerns, and desires.

Our communities are rich in human resources which simply need to be utilized. Potential outlets for human resources include public and private schools in the area, colleges and universities, city and county park and recreation departments, community schools, and challenge course instructors. The schools in the area have a substantial number of drama, music, and physical education teachers. Colleges and universities have a wealth of expertise in programming, staff training, and information. They can

also supply practicum students, work experience students, and interns. Many parks and recreation personnel are faced with youth related problems on a day to day basis, so they understand these related problems. They are trained and experienced in establishing understanding affiliations with troubled young people in order to get them involved in their programs. Therefore, they are ideal and valuable associates in this process. Challenge course instructors are also model affiliates; their entire program is built around trust and interdependence, while working through problem situations with others.

The physical resources at youth detention centers are often insufficient. The recreation facilities are usually small and the recreation equipment inadequate; however, in this situation the facilities are not the major factor. It is the interaction between the youth detention center staff, qualified recreation personnel outside the system, and the incarcerated young people which is so valuable and the point which must be focused on.

The operative word for financial resources should be, "share the wealth." A great deal of money is not required for equipment, facilities, or materials. Staff is in place, so there are no extra personnel costs. Training for the detention center staff is a necessity and there will be some expense associated with this need. Secured funding are ideal, so that initial and ongoing training are not interrupted. By involving a variety of organizations the securing of grants is a much easier process.

Organizations must leverage all available human, physical, financial, and informational resources through cooperative efforts to develop the finest service delivery. As the old saying goes, "if we do not care who gets the credit, many wonderful things can happen." It is even more important to remember that if organizations will collaborate, they can do much more with their resources. It is a win-win situation for all, and the appropriate parties can get credit for the accomplishments which take place. These efforts provide all participating organizations a great opportunity to display their involvement in the process. Each organization has its own mechanism for receiving recognition. Therefore, each organization's exposure expands the sphere of recognition for each organization involved. A nice thought is the fact that the really big winners are the incarcerated young people (Uhlik, 1995).

Synergistic Leadership

Synergistic leadership applies to both the collaborating organizations and the incarcerated youth. A shared planning formula must be designed to construct cooperation with representatives of the various organizations. This course of action is a methodical process in which leaders layout their prospective plans and their methods for accomplishing them. It is critical that these representatives provide pertinent data and discuss experiences in the early stages of their meetings.

One such data sharing method is cooperative action planning. Action plans need be devised to effectively impact this special population. It is imperative to share each other's program evolution, procedures, resources, and pattern of activity delivery. Discrepancies separating the two disciplines and ways to use commonalities in operating

together in cooperative activities must be conjointed. The most exhilarating aspect of this course of action is discovering the possibilities which these cooperative ventures can have on impacting youth in a positive manner.

Program Process and Content Action Plans

The literature on at-risk youth settings identifies various programming principles which are important in the generation of productive programs. A *fundamental principle* is the fact that recreation has been the way for young people to find role models and opportunities for mentorship. A *second principle* is recognizing that programs and activities need to be applicable to the youth served. When activity stimulus is to promote involvement, make sure it is pertinent to the targeted young people. Youth involvement in the planning and creation process is one of the best ways to accomplish the goal (Hultsman & Little, 1995). A *third principle* is giving thorough and personal acknowledgment and rewards for accomplishments and for each goal achieved on an unfailing basis; hopefully, on a daily basis. Grandiose grandeur is not required; plain old-fashioned encouragement or recognition in the presence of others works very well (Witt & Crompton, 1996).

The *fourth principle* is setting up situations for the young people to be of assistance to others. By doing so, favorable occasions to establish meaningful affiliations with peers and staff are possible. Activities need a special composition to permit and invite interaction between those involved in the program. Principle number five consists of implicit sustenance and unqualified acceptance of the youth. A code of behavior is indispensable and is to be firmly sustained, while ensuring dignity and being the young person's advocate in all situations. A multitude of these young people have been confronted with continual disillusionment and unfavorable judgment by adults. They need to be able to formulate a rationale that adults are concerned about their welfare despite their situation or demeanor (Allen, Stevens, & Harwell, 1996). The foundation for generating proactive recreation activities for youth in juvenile detention centers can be established by using these principles. They can be globally addressed with a variety of recreation opportunities and are inherently valuable for recreation programming with any group of young people.

Processing is a significant aspect in the development of productive recreation programming. Young people must have time to ponder their impressions and circumstances which come to mind while participating in a particular recreation activity. Processing can be quite unpretentious where a staff member may talk to the young people and exchange ideas and opinions as opportunities arise by having the youth think about what is occurring at that moment, or the leader may elect to wait until the completion of the activity. Marvelous educational opportunities are missed by not processing recreation experiences at the right time. Processing needs to be a natural aspect of the recreation venture (Allen et al., 1996).

Persistent tracking and summarization of the program's process is a vital aspect of the programming effort and will help to ensure the effectiveness of the recreation

program. The responses from these efforts are crucial to accomplishing the goals and performance objectives. By tracking these experiences, the leader is viligant to the goals and objectives of the program and makes changes to meet the expressed concerns. Daily entries of the leader's remarks are needed to properly track any progress. This extra effort will supply a keen perception which otherwise is not possible. The final stage of this process is to have a good evaluation plan for appraising activity and program results. One may be able to obtain appropriate evaluation tools; however, if this is not possible, the program leader will need to construct a measure of success.

Conclusion

The utilization of recreation programs and activities as an intervention tool in juvenile detention centers is a concept whose time has arrived. The need to curtail socially deviant behavior among young people has been a long-standing issue and an uphill battle. Now is the time for a more contemporary approach. The opportunity to share ideas, theories, resources, training, and research findings has unlimited possibilities for this special population. Faced with the reality of ever increasing juvenile crimes which equates to swelling juvenile detention center populations, logically prompts juvenile detention officials to use every available resource to communicate, interact, and intervene in the lives of incarcerated young people. When collaborating from these perspectives, models can be developed to target and address factors that may otherwise prevent intervention between the juvenile detention center staff and the incarcerated young people. Let the cooperation, intervention, training, program applications, evaluation, and changing of young people's lives begin. ■

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Chapter 22

Risk Factors Associated with Juvenile Delinquency: A Case for Early Intervention and Prevention Programs

Melissa Songer

The empirical connection between juvenile delinquency and family dysfunction has been established over the past twenty years (Farrington, 1987; Schwartz, Rendon, & Hsieh, 1994; Veneziano & Veneziano, 1992; Wahler, 1987; Werner, 1987; Wolfe, 1987). Research suggests that many children committing delinquent acts come from dysfunctional families where allegations of child maltreatment have been reported. James Gabarino, Ph.D., associate professor of Human Development at Pennsylvania State University, testified before the U.S. Senate Sub-Committee on Juvenile Justice in 1983 about the link between child abuse and juvenile delinquency, providing the committee with specific policy recommendations. In his opinion, child abuse is positively associated with juvenile delinquency and juvenile delinquency can result in further child abuse, especially among adolescents as frustrated parents attempt to exert control over difficult teenage children. Juveniles remanded to institutions are likewise often subject to abuse as are those juveniles who run away and become involved in exploitative relationships with adults and peers.

This project was initiated by the District 14 Multi-agency Network for Severely Emotionally Disturbed Children (SEDNET) and examined portions of the domain of juvenile maladjustment. First, it reviewed the characteristics of juveniles who have been incarcerated in the Polk Detention Center, located in Bartow, Florida, to search for associations within the child welfare, mental health, and special education systems. The questions examined by the author included the following areas of scientific inquiry:

1. *What are the root causes and the strongest predictors of delinquency?*
2. *What types of prevention or intervention approaches display the best potential for reducing instances of delinquent behavior?*
3. *How can local social service agencies integrate and coordinate services to respond to the complex needs of families and prevent delinquent behavior?*

Although answers to these questions may never be "known," delinquency research has constructed a powerful paradigm to explain the multifaceted causes of juvenile delinquency and other problem behaviors, such as substance abuse, school failure and teen pregnancy.

Literature Review

Delinquency prevention research generally consists of two design types. One type is the cross-sectional design, whereas the researcher draws subjects from court records, detention center populations or other "captured" groups. Although this approach has been criticized (Zingraff, Leiter, Myers, & Johnsen, 1993) for failing to include comparison groups to control for factors such as socioeconomic status, age, race, and gender, these studies have added structure to knowledge about factors that influence juvenile offending. Studies about the influence of early life events (Deutsch & Erickson, 1989) and family typology (Veneziano & Veneziano, 1992) have provided valuable insight into predictors. Caseload commonalities noted among child protective, mental health, juvenile justice and special education providers yield insight into the mechanism for social planning (Thompson, 1988). Even so, critiques of these kinds of studies (Schwartz, Rendon, & Hsieh, 1994) have called for more rigorous research using matched control groups, socioeconomic factors, and separation of abuse categories.

Longitudinal (cohort) studies have been conducted which provide empirical data supporting the assortment of antecedents identified as precursors of juvenile delinquency (Farrington, 1987; Wahler, 1987; Werner, 1987). Correlations have been noted among many adolescent problem behaviors such as delinquency, teen pregnancy, mental health problems, dropping out of school, and substance abuse. These problem behaviors also share common precursors such as family conflict, child maltreatment, childhood aggression, conduct problems, poverty, poor health, poor nutrition, and learning difficulties. Early troublesome, dishonest, aggressive or antisocial behavior was significantly associated with later offenses leading researchers to construct models of causation suggesting intersecting variables can create more than a cumulative effect, but also a multiplier effect, increasing the likelihood that later problems will manifest (Loeber, 1987; Wolfe, 1987).

What is it about these events that place a child at risk of delinquency? Among the various theories is speculation that maltreatment of children, inconsistent discipline, chronic health problems and other stressors can interfere with the child's ability to bond to its caregiver (Cicchetti & Toth, 1995; Magid & McKelvey, 1990; Shaw & Bell, 1993). This can result in a weak or nonexistent attachment with social institutions and may lead to the development of antisocial personality disorder (APD) in the child.[1] This disorder is characterized by aggression against others in various forms, deep feelings of anger and an inability to trust others. Even if APD is not evident, children with poor bonding often exhibit a wide range of dysfunctional behaviors (Lyons, Alpern, & Repacholi, 1993).

This view is consistent with research about the precursors of delinquency. Childhood aggression has been noted as one of the most stable predictors of delinquent behavior, and the most difficult to extinguish. Childhood aggression is evident in most chronic offenders who grow into adult criminals (Loeber, 1991). Protective influences, where few exist, can be engendered through practices that foster attachments between children and adults who represent positive role models (Farrington, 1987; Magid & McKelvey, 1990; Werner, 1987). Especially among children with high intelligence, the presence of at least one positive role model with whom the child can bond has been shown to lead to improved levels of social competence (Zigler, Taussig, & Black, 1992) which can be measured by an increase in abilities to relate to adults and peers as well as negotiate their environment.

Can the cycle of failure to attach be interrupted? It is axiomatic among mental health providers that these individuals are difficult, if not impossible to treat (Luntz, Widom, & Spatz, 1994). Some therapeutic approaches have shown promise, but have not been universally accepted (Magid & McKelvey, 1990). Disturbing clinical findings set the age of seven as the upper range to intervene in these children's lives effectively. This offers scant opportunity to change the direction of many lives and ultimately leaves containment as one of few alternatives.

Prevention and Intervention Strategies

The ability to make predictions about behavior is necessary when designing an intervention strategy. Even if all the predictive variables are known, interventions may not be designed or implemented well. Most internal deficits noted in intervention programs derive from insufficient or short-lived funding, too narrow a focus, insufficient treatment duration or the program's failure to address external contingencies such as motivation for change, cultural insensitivities, lack of community support systems and natural attrition of participants (Leitenberg, 1987). Some researchers have concluded that programs that target specific behaviors usually demonstrate weak levels of effectiveness and recommend an "ecological approach." By responding to the child's total environment this approach seeks to improve competence in interacting with the multiple systems that impact his life. This finding is consistent with recommendations that prevention efforts should focus on social and environmental correlates of delinquency instead of interventions based upon identification of established behaviors (Lindgren, 1987).

Participants showed fewer school-related problems, fewer arrests and fewer severe infractions when enrolled in programs such as the Perry Preschool Project, the Syracuse University Family Development Research Program, the Yale Child Welfare Research Program, and the Houston Parent-Child Development Center (Zigler,Taussig, & Black, 1992). Parental involvement was a strong component of each of these programs which also incorporated regular home visitations. Although these programs targeted improvement of educational outcomes, there were stronger correlations for reductions in delinquency than for school success.

Research addressing the various causal models propose community-based programs that intervene in and prevent child maltreatment by improving parental capacity to rear children. Risk factors that identify probable candidates for intervention include family conflict, insecure attachment and poor family communication, poor supervision, non-responsive, nondemocratic and permissive child rearing practices, problem behavior at an early age, school risk factors, personality factors, and risky peer group associations. Research findings have suggested family settings and school as suitable locations for prevention programs. Directed at parents and teachers, such programs seek to improve knowledge of child development, communication skills, effective parenting and teaching strategies and conflict management (Clements, 1988; Scholte, 1992) noting that treatment should not isolate and label youth, but should be provided in the natural environment using the community as a vehicle for change while programs influence systemic and structural improvements.

Project Design and Methodology

Over several meetings in the fall of 1994, the SEDNET Advisory Board reviewed available services in the HRS District 14 for children and families. While agreeing that services were generally overtaxed and that there were children and families whose needs were not being met, it was the group's view that outcomes of services should be evaluated. Although there are many instances of individual success, most participants agreed that the so-called "failures" of the systems in question should be examined to learn whether a profile existed.

To test these assumptions, the group identified children incarcerated at the Polk Juvenile Detention Center as a population where there had likely been sufficient dysfunctional dynamics in the family to have come to the attention of the various social service systems, i.e., HRS, mental health providers, and special education. A sample was provided to a SEDNET subcommittee assigned to collect and analyze the data. It consisted of the entire JDC population, juveniles on Home Detention, and Pre-placement status on a given day (January 14, 1995).

The data gathered on the population included standard demographic information such as sex, age, race, and socioeconomic status as well as the following variables: abuse reports, mental health services by type, previous law enforcement involvement, economic services, history of domestic violence, school history (absences, ESE services, and free/reduced lunch), Foster Care services, number of schools attended, and family disruptions.

The GAPS Assessment Survey

The subcommittee decided that a questionnaire should be designed to collect information about the sample population that could not be easily gathered through archived sources. Using the literature review as a guide, an instrument was constructed to gather data on variables relating to early childhood, behavior, family life, school experience, and use of social services.

The instrument was field-tested during the Fall of 1995 to detect weaknesses in the survey design. After some revisions in the instrument, surveys were mailed out in early 1996 so that minimal pressure was exerted on survey recipients. One hundred and ninety-four surveys were mailed to the parents or guardians of the youth represented in the JDC, pre-placement, and home detention sample population. Addresses for parents and guardians were provided by the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Polk County School system.

The comparison group was selected through a stratified sampling technique. Student rosters of every middle and high school in Polk County were used to select names to make up a sample of 200 children. The use of this method was to ensure that the sample population was geographically represented.

Response rates for both groups were low (JDC population = 14.4%; Comparison population = 19%). It is speculated that the reason for the low response rate was a result of factors relating to the nature of the survey since some questions pertained to sensitive personal issues. Having a low response rate is also usual for mailed surveys.

Data Analysis

Overall, the data collected was compatible with existing research in the field and displayed the overlap of the juvenile justice, child welfare, and community mental health systems at the local level (HRS District XIV) in a way that was remarkably similar to the overlap of these systems in Alberta, Canada (Thompson, 1988).

Out of 194 juveniles incarcerated in the Polk JDC, on home detention and pre-placement, one hundred and six, (54.3%) had reported incidents of abuse or neglect examined by Child Protective Investigators. Fifty-four percent of the reports were for physical (39.4%) or sexual abuse (14.4%) with complaints of inadequate supervision (21%) being the next most frequent report.

Analysis of the juveniles' ages revealed a mean of 15.2 years with a standard deviation of 1.63. The minimum age was nine while the oldest adolescent was nineteen years of age. A breakdown of the county of origin provided the following percentages; Polk (87.7%), Highlands (10.3%), and Hardee (2.1%). This finding is consistent with the population distribution among the three counties.

An analysis of gender and ethnicity of the juveniles showed that African-American males were over-represented in the Detention Center. More than half of the JDC population, including females, were African-American. Noting that the local population of African-Americans comprise approximately 15% of the total population in Polk, Highlands, and Hardee Counties, the JDC distribution exposes the representational imbalance. African-American males made up 39.7% of the total JDC group, while white males comprised 30.9%. Representation of Hispanic males totaled 4.1%, a figure that is compatible with the local demographics. Overall, about three-fourths of the population was male.

A breakdown of the types of offenses found the most frequently occurring offense was property-related (50.3%), crimes against persons (16.4%) the next highest, felonies (14.9%), while status violations, conduct crimes, and other misdemeanors added up to 18.5%. The number of youth whose families received economic services, defined as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (ADFC), food stamps, and/or Medicaid totaled 129 (66.5%). A total of 58 (30%) youth had been enrolled in special education programs. The breakdown for this subgroup was 11.9% in Learning Disabled, 11.9% in Emotionally Handicapped, 2.1% in Severely Emotionally Disturbed, and 4.1% in Mentally Disabled (EMR).

Data was collected on the numbers and types of HRS referrals to families. A total of 76 referrals was made on the cases investigated by HRS out of 106 abuse reports. Most of the referrals were for mental health services (35 of 76, or 46%). Mental health services received by the youth in the sample were totaled at 67 out of 194 (34.5%); most of those services were outpatient services (27 children, or 40%). The rest of the services received were scattered across different modalities, with crisis stabilization services (non-hospital inpatient) at 14 children (21% of total).

The observed frequencies for school, abuse, and offense are summarized in Table 1. Using Spearman Correlation Coefficients, several significant associations among these variables were uncovered. Age of first offense report and age of first abuse report were positively correlated at .3252 (2-tailed significance = .001). Number of offenses reported and average number of absences were correlated at .1795 (2-tailed significance = .037) while number of alternative education programs and absences were correlated at .3189 (2-tailed significance = .001). Likewise, number of schools attended and

Table 1
Variable Frequencies

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std Dev
Absences	135	18.2	12.6
Grade level	149	8.35	1.42
Age of 1st abuse	106	11.6	2.8
No. of abuse reports	106	2.07	1.57
Age of 1st offense	193	12.7	2.36
No. of offenses	193	12.8	10.69
No. of schools	137	5.03	3.13
No. of alt. prog.	124	1.6	1.5

absences were correlated at .2887 (2-tailed significance = .001). Number of abuse reports and age of first abuse report were negatively correlated at -.2784 (2-tailed significance = .004). Age of first offense and number of abuse reports were negatively correlated at -.2227 (2-tailed significance = .022). Also interesting was that number of offenses were inversely correlated with the age of first offense at -.4056 (2-tailed significance = .000). Number of offenses and number of alternative educational programs were positively correlated at .2266 (2-tailed significance = .011). Number of offenses and number of schools attended were correlated at .1884 (2-tailed significance = .028).

Analysis of the GAPS Assessment Survey

The GAPS Assessment Survey was analyzed using the Wilcoxon Rank Sum W Test - Mann-Whitney U. Each variable was analyzed separately to find different population locations between each group. Table 2 shows the results of the Mann-Whitney U. It was noted that differences in population location in the Early Childhood section of the survey were not significant, although the rest of the surveys sections showed significant differences between the populations.

Table 2
GAPS Survey Variables

	JDC Pop Mean Rank	Random Pop Mean Rank	2-tailed P
Early Childhood	*n=28*	*n=38*	
Normal birth	29.83	35.25	.2307
Prenatal care	28.81	35.03	.1411
Normal development	30.37	35.25	.2791
Healthy infant/toddler	31.28	34.22	.4839
Separation before age one	32.89	33.08	.9625
Child could play quietly	29.85	34.32	.3242
Daycare before age one	33.30	32.79	.9106
Daycare less than 48 hrs/wk	29.46	31.24	.6745
Behavioral problems in daycare	29.20	31.24	.7824
Attended preschool	36.70	30.37	.1693
School			
Regular school attendance	27.52	37.91	.0172
Special Ed. classes	28.17	36.43	.0726
Child gets along with others	25.48	37.62	.0072
Child follows school rules	20.80	42.23	.0000
Child maintains 'C' or better	26.07	38.24	.0085
No suspensions	21.98	41.99	.0000

continued next page

Table 2 continued

Child Behaviors			
Obedience	27.20	37.39	.0268
Child seems happy	27.79	37.71	.0300
Parent likes child's friends	21.25	41.89	.0000
Maladaptive behaviors	24.21	40.34	.0005
Child is disciplined	28.00	36.78	.0479
Parent enjoys time with child	26.80	38.43	.0076
Same sex role model	25.63	39.30	.0024
Family Circumstances			
Received gov't assistance	30.39	35.79	.2438
Received rent assistance	31.89	34.68	.5372
Both parents in home	28.48	37.20	.0508
Child sees both parents regularly	26.63	38.57	.0102
Physical violence between parents	30.27	35.88	.2266
HRS involvement (non-financial)	28.54	36.38	.0841
Physical/sexual abuse of child	27.81	36.68	.0452
Family mental illness	27.96	37.58	.0293
Family substance abuse	24.04	40.47	.0002
Convictions (non-traffic)	24.14	40.39	.0003
Parent(s) employed currently	31.00	34.51	.4249
Parent(s) unemployed > six mos	33.69	31.68	.6627
Disabled for more than six months	30.87	33.69	.5325

The Mann-Whitney U statistical test results suggest significant differences between the self-report of JDC parents and the parents of the comparison group concerning their children's school performance and behaviors. Most notable was the significance of variables relating to suspensions (.000), following school rules (.000), child's maladaptive behaviors (.005), parents liking child's friends (.000), child has same sex role model (.002), and parent enjoys spending time with child (.008).

Under the section of Family Circumstances, fewer differences between sample populations were noted. The salient differences included both parents in the home (.051), child has regular contact with both parents (.01), child has been physically or sexually abused (.045), mental illness in the family (.03), substance abuse in family (.0002), and family member conviction of non-traffic offenses (.0003). The dissimilarities among the variables for the two groups, although based on self-report and a small sample size, display congruencies with current research in delinquency causation and prevention.

Discussion of Findings and Implications for Policy Change

First, the findings of this study are limited in their interpretive strength due to the

small number of respondents to the GAPS Assessment survey. Also, the thorough description of the JDC population was not applied to the comparison group. In addition, criticisms regarding use of convenience sampling techniques in selecting the study population underline weaknesses in the data correlations. For these reasons, conclusions regarding the confidence of the study's results must be mitigated by the gaps in the study itself. Subsequent trials of the research methods are necessary prior to any wholesale acceptance of the outcomes noted in this report.

Two databases were created for this study. The first database is a cross-section of the District XIV Juvenile Detention Center population on a given date while the second is a set of survey responses from parents of two groups. These groups, the JDC population and a randomly selected group of children who attend middle and high schools in Polk County, were used to seek factors that influence youth prior to their involvement in illegal acts and other problem behaviors. While not all the expected results of the survey analysis materialized, especially concerning early childhood influences, some differences in the pattern of parental responses were evident. These patterns relate to the child's behavior in school and at home as well as to areas of family dysfunction, most notably around absent parents and family problems such as child abuse, substance abuse, mental illness and legal problems.

These findings, in relationship to the lack of evidence for early influences, especially for the assumed protective influence of preschool attendance, suggests that most preschool programs, such as Headstart are not sufficient to prevent later problems in school and other parts of the child's life. It is the author's opinion that since these programs usually do not intervene in the problems that families face, gains made by the child in education are not sustained when the stress of dysfunctional family life continues unabated (Yoshikawa, 1994).

The cross-sectional database of the Juvenile Detention Center population illustrated a group where over half had official records of child abuse. The number of significant correlations between child abuse and delinquency among this sample population (refer to data analysis section), especially the inverse directionality between age of first abuse report and number of offenses, as well as the positive correlation between age of first abuse and age of first offense, could signify that early and repeat offending is connected to child maltreatment. These findings and those in the GAPS Survey analysis create a picture of the delinquent child's life history. Single parent homes combined with criminal activity, child abuse, mental illness and/or substance abuse appear to produce children who have little attachment to parents, teachers, and society's rules and regulations.

Funding strategies of the OJJDP are grounded in a growing body of research that has concentrated on the examination of risk factors and the methodologies for effective intervention and prevention of juvenile delinquency. Unfortunately, funding priorities are still primarily focused on containment and management of offenders, leaving few resources available for primary and secondary prevention efforts. It will take realization by the public that primary prevention and early intervention programs can be effective,

if adequately funded, before the State Legislature will allocate the funding required to operate these types of programs. The academic community has provided a strong theoretical base for program development, but the leap from knowing to doing is so broad that agencies sometimes refuse the effort. *The juvenile justice system seems crisis-driven, a policy that never allows the system to catch up with itself.* If more programming fails to reduce the juvenile crime rate, then what will happen? Additional containment measures at a greater cost to taxpayers will direct more resources at offender management, leaving less available for prevention and early intervention programs.

It is time for communities to demand that the social service agencies in their districts work together to implement policies toward improving the lives of families and children. The federal Family Preservation and Support Program funded through the Health and Human Services Department provides the basis and funding for prevention and early intervention approaches. Because the program is discretionary and requires matching funds, it is not available in every community. State and federal budget cuts also threaten the program when HRS districts are forced to choose between program areas to reduce support. This funding situation forces social agencies into a crisis-driven system where families do not receive assistance until problems have become entrenched and more difficult to resolve. Lack of prevention and early intervention funding strategies leads to more out of home care or incarceration, costing the State more money in the long term.

Concerning social policy crafting, all levels of government must work to remove barriers for communities to receive funding and implement a family-centered continuum of programs that seek to serve families holistically. Agencies that provide compartmentalized services treat families, not as units, but as individual service recipients who must meet narrowly-identified criteria before their needs are addressed. Access to the system should be voluntary and generalized with offerings of non-threatening assistance for families and individuals who cannot afford services from the private sector. Service providers who hold contracts with public agencies should be held to the highest standards and be provided with technical assistance by contract managers who have expertise in the funded program areas. Services to families should be made acceptable so that the frequency of coercive methods such as court orders can be reduced. Mechanisms for feedback should be a mandated component of service provision so that administrators can be held accountable for agency performance (Leitenberg, 1987).

Prevention and early intervention programs need not address a particular social ill, such as child maltreatment, juvenile delinquency, teen pregnancy or school failure (Leitenberg, 1987; Yoshikawa, 1994). *Rather, the focus should be on a goal of providing support to families so that each member can reach their full potential.* An effective vehicle for providing family support are programs that address the educational and emotional needs of individuals, particularly of young children. Quality preschool programs have demonstrated their effectiveness toward providing protective factors in

children's lives, especially where such programs have included parent education and home visitation (Yoshikawa, 1994; Zigler, Taussig, & Black, 1992). Such programs should be universally available to working parents, to mothers receiving public assistance and to pregnant women (especially teenagers) of any circumstance.

An important part of the process is community awareness and education. Parents, teachers and service providers should be instructed about risk factors affecting children and how protective influences support their natural resiliency to survive multiple stressors. The public must be made to understand that confinement of offenders, while necessary, will not prevent the next generation of juveniles from committing crimes, perhaps in greater numbers. The public also must understand the need for structural changes to revenue generation to support sufficiently funded and closely monitored family-focused programming. This can only be accomplished when policy makers recognize that most social problems are rooted in dysfunctional or uninformed parenting and, that often, well-meaning but inadequate intervention by social agencies can cause further breakdowns in family structure and functioning, thus weakening the fabric of the community as a whole. ■

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ISBN 0-07-366118-X
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